

FIGHT RACISMS

FIGHT IMPERIALISMS

Anti-imperialist paper of the Revolutionary Communist Group

Issue No 24 November 15-December 15 1982 Price 20p



Home Office Bulletin

STATISTICS OF OPPRESSION

In the dry dust of a Home Office Statistical Bulletin on the Uprisings, the facts and figures of racism and oppression are starkly revealed. The Bulletin's figures (released in October) speak for themselves.

- 4,000 people were arrested during the July/August 1981 Uprisings. By July 1982 3,400 had gone through the courts. No less than 700 had received gaol sentences – that is 30% of those sentenced went to Britain's hellish gaols.
- 73% of those tried were found guilty. Even some lawyers expressed grave doubts about the way in which the court cases were conducted. Frame-ups were the order of the day and the courts played a full part in this.
- The poorest went to prison. 46% of unemployed people charged got prison sentences compared to 29% of those in work.
- About half of those arrested were unemployed. But in Liverpool 8 (where the uprising was most fierce and prolonged) the unemployed accounted for 2/3 of arrests.
- Almost 1/3 of people arrested were black, thus showing the leading role which they played in the Uprisings. Of these 46% were unemployed compared to 35% of white people.
- Where the Uprisings were most deeply rooted in the community is shown by the level of participation by women. Overall 8% of those arrested were women. But in Brixton this rose to 15% and in Liverpool 8 to 20%.

These are the statistics of oppression. For fighting back against racism, oppression and police harassment 700 brothers and sisters went to gaol. Yet so far not a single policeman has been tried and found guilty. The police who killed Davy Moore walked free from court. No charges were brought against the police who maimed Kenny Anderson and Phil Robins by firing CS gas cartridges into their bodies. We await the December trial of those police charged with offences during the Brixton Uprising with no illusions. The police, the courts and the prisons are the weapons which the ruling class use against the poor and oppressed when they dare to rise up and fight back.

MW

SINN FEIN TRIUMPH

The triumph of 5 Sinn Fein candidates in the 20 October Assembly elections was a severe political defeat for British imperialism. Commenting on the election results, a Sinn Fein member said:

'They thought they had smashed republicanism last year during the hunger strike but we proved them wrong.'

Following the hunger strike, British imperialism displayed greater confidence in its war against the Republican Movement. It used informers to arrest hundreds of Republicans and stepped up repression and terror in the hope of delivering a fatal blow to the nationalist resistance. All the time it was acting on the assumption that popular support for the Republican Movement had collapsed with the end of the hunger strike. The assembly election results threw all such assumptions back into the face of the British government.

Sinn Fein's election results demonstrated, yet again, the mass popular support that the Republican Movement and the IRA enjoys within the nationalist community. With only 12 candidates Sinn Fein received 64,191 first preference votes, representing 35% of all votes cast by the nationalist population. In West Belfast, Gerry Adams received 9,740 votes, greater than the combined votes of 3 SDLP candidates in the constituency. Adams' running mate Alex Maskey missed a seat by only 900 votes. In Fermanagh-South Tyrone Owen Carron got 14,025 votes, again greater than the total vote of 3 SDLP candidates. Carron's running mate missed a second seat by only 500 votes. In Derry, Martin

before it even had the chance to stand up and lie to the world. With Sinn Fein boycotting the assembly, and the SDLP forced to follow suit, the Thatcher government will have no 'democratic assembly' taking into account 'cross community concerns'. To tout around the world as evidence of its reforming and progressive intentions. British rule in Ireland stands naked as rule by force against the nationalist working class.

British imperialism's 'criminalisation strategy' also received a decisive blow, all the more so because the blow was delivered in the hallowed grounds of corrupt British imperialist elections. David Beresford of *The Guardian* immediately recognised this:

continued on page 2



Gerry Adams

McGuinness received 8,207 votes; in Mid-Ulster 6,927 votes went to Danny Morrison and in Armagh Jim McAllister won with 5,182 votes. In North Belfast Joe Austin, who topped the nationalist candidates with 4,029 votes, lost a seat by only 184 votes behind the SDLP's Pascal O'Hare.

The British army and the RUC did everything they could to prevent such an outcome. During the course of their campaign 51 Sinn Fein workers were arrested, 8 of whom on appearing in court had cases against them dismissed and were awarded £30 each. But such petty harassment was no match for the solidarity Sinn Fein enjoyed from the nationalist working class, and Sinn Fein emerged, in the words of *The Guardian*, as 'a major force in terms of constitutional politics.'

The first victim of the Republican Movement's election success is of course Prior's assembly. It has died

BANKING CRISIS LOOMS

Further evidence of the looming international banking crisis mounts daily. Latest estimates put the total international debt of the oppressed nations at \$629bn. A recent count showed that 40 oppressed countries are now behind on their repayments – up from 26 at the end of last year. The loans of the nine major US banks to Mexico and Brazil amount to almost their entire capital; when loans to other oppressed nations and socialist countries are included, this amounts to nearly 2 1/2 times their total capital.

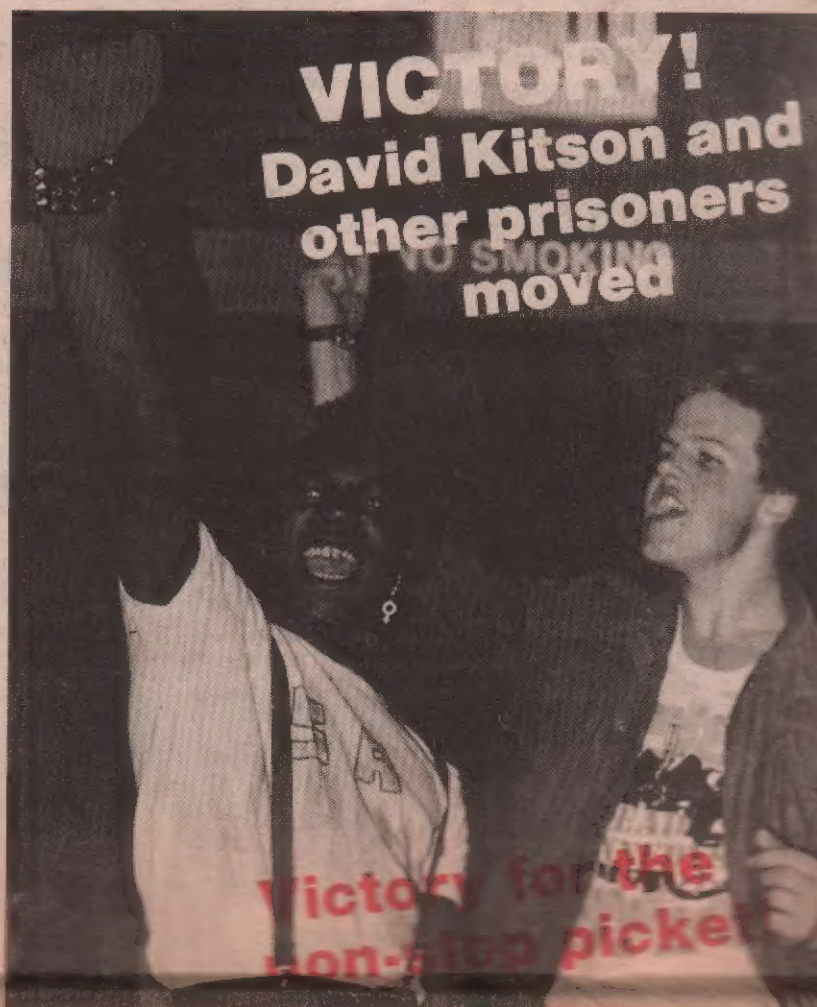
Yet it is not simply the colossal size of the debt which makes the banking system so vulnerable, but its concentration in a handful of oppressed nations. While most Asian and African countries are too poor to be considered 'good risks', the bankers have fallen over one another to lend to the richest of the poor – the so-called 'Newly Industrialising Countries'. The Latin American countries hold 60% of the bankers' debt while South Korea, Taiwan and the Philippines account for much of the remainder. It is this concentration of debt that enables a crisis in a single country, such as Mexico, to rock the entire banking system.

Yet these same countries are now in an impossible position. The servicing of their debt has reached such proportions that they are unable to pay it back. For

some of the largest borrowers, the repayment and interest on their debt far exceeds what they earn from their exports. Even if they were to import nothing, they cannot keep up their commitments.

Country	Debt Service Payments as % of Export Earnings	Total Debt \$bn
Argentina	179	37
Mexico	129	80
Brazil	122	75
Ecuador	122	6.8
Chile	116	15
Venezuela	95	18.5
Philippines	92	15
South Korea	54	32.5

But the forthcoming imperialist trade war is going to make repayment even more difficult, because the first casualties will be these countries whose grain, steel, textile and chemical exports are about to be shut out of imperialist markets.



The non-stop picket outside South Africa House is still going strong! As we go to press this day and night anti-imperialist demonstration enters its 77th day just as news of a tremendous victory comes through! The South African regime has been forced to move David Kitson and other political prisoners in Pretoria Central Hanging Jail to a new prison!

Despite some really appalling weather, the spirit of the picket remains high and

new people are being drawn into the struggle each day. Nearly 80,000 signatures are now on the petition calling for the release of David Kitson and all South African political prisoners.

Many youth themselves are taking on tasks of organisation and the social they held (see report on page 3) was a resounding success. Growing numbers of youth are proving their commitment to

continued on page 2

The Mexican crisis gave the bankers a nasty scare, and lending policy has become more cautious recently. Some bankers are counting on a 'forthcoming recovery' of the imperialist economy others are attempting to plot a safe course past the looming disaster. However there is no such safe course. While caution may prevent thoughtless decisions or rash gambles from triggering a world banking crisis, it cannot overcome the fundamental problem: the imperialist exploitation of these countries which, impoverishing them, prevents them from paying off their debts. The soaring growth of debt contrasts with

continued on page 2

INSIDE

Build the Irish Solidarity Movement 2

South Africa: London Embassy – Nest of Spies 3

Anti-Racist Fightback: Leeds, Brixton, Newham 8, NUS Racist Levy 4 & 5

Notes and Comments, Police File 6

The Communist Tradition on Ireland Part 17: Britain and the Irish Revolution 7, 8, 9, 10 & 11

International: El Salvador, Lebanon 12

The Russian Revolution 1917 13

RCG/FRFI Monthly Round-up and Letters 14 & 15

Hands Off Ireland! 16

BUILD THE IRISH SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

In last year's hunger strike campaign the middle class left strategy of alliance with the Labour Party left was exposed as bankrupt: its only result being to prevent any movement being built. As a result of that experience four leading members of the Troops Out Movement (TOM) – the main vehicle of middle class left work on Ireland – are now arguing, in a document called 'Notes on building a withdrawal movement', for the abandonment of the demand Troops Out Now precisely in order to make an alliance with the Labour Party left.

The authors – Bob Churchill, Chris Reeves, Steve Lord and Phil Shemeld – are unashamed about this:

'The question of withdrawal now is not a principle, but a diversion' ('Notes...' para 6)

And earlier they say:

'Troops Out Now...constitutes a barrier to building a meaningful withdrawal movement.' ('Notes...' para 3)

'...political activists here, such as the Labour Party left, are looking for positive practical solutions to work around, not just catch phrases.' ('Notes...' para 4)

Troops Out Now has never been a principle for TOM: it has been abandoned in practice for many years. But the four have understood that this is not enough. The hunger strike showed them that if they want an alliance with the Labour Party left then they must abandon, explicitly, every interest of the Irish people and the British working class. Troops Out Now simply means that British imperialism has no right whatever to occupy Ireland. It is clearly not a diversion from the struggle for Irish self-determination. It is, however, a diversion from building an alliance with the Labour Party who will never support the Irish struggle against British rule. The four authors reverse Marx by making concessions to the Labour Party rather than to the Irish people. Their answer to TOM's failure during the hunger strike is to call on TOM to move more decisively and explicitly into the camp of opportunism.

The document's obsession with the supposed 'provo image' of TOM is further evidence of this. Revolutionaries do not hesitate to make clear their unconditional support for the Provisional Republican Movement precisely

year's hunger strike should have driven this home.

The utterly reactionary and racist character of this move is made clear in the reference to Irish POWs in Britain:

'Campaigns, for example, on IRA prisoners in English jails are about the last topic any British withdrawal movement should concern itself with, as their plight is the most difficult and fruitless aspect to take up of the whole Irish question.' ('Notes...' para 9)

The issue of Irish POWs strikes at the

Building an Irish Solidarity Movement

ONE DAY NATIONAL CONFERENCE

called by North London Irish Solidarity Committee and South London Irish Solidarity Committee

Saturday 20 November 9.15 – 5.30

Caxton House, St John's Way, Archway, N19

SPONSORED BY: Gerry McLochlainn, Eddie Byrne, Patrick Hackett, Vincent Donnelly, Raymond McLoughlin, Jimmy Ashe, Andy Mulryan, Patrick Guilfoyle (Irish POWs), Rhona Toland aunt of Stephen McConomy, Wolfe Tone Cumann of Sinn Fein, Connolly/Keegan Cumann of Sinn Fein, Bangladesh Workers Association (London), Dafydd Elis Thomas MP, John La Rose, Charlie Rossi and Keith Veness (Labour councillors), Hemel Hempstead Branch ACTT, Epsom and Ewell Peace Group, Bradford Irish Solidarity Committee, Tyneside Action Committee on Ireland, Glasgow Irish Freedom Action Committee, Troops Out Movement – South London, Haringey, Bristol and Merseyside branches, RCG, RCL, Michael Holden (Hemel Hempstead shop steward and Sinn Fein member) and many others

SESSIONS ON: Solidarity with the Irish revolution; Irish prisoners, PTA and police harassment. Debates and discussion. Local reports. **SPEAKERS** will include: **DAVID REED** Author of the Communist Tradition on Ireland **ALISTAIR LOGAN** solicitor with detailed knowledge of the PTA and Irish prisoners. **MICHAEL HOLDEN** Hemel Hempstead shop steward and Sinn Fein member. **HELEN O'BRIEN** (sister of Irish POW). Many others invited

ALL WELCOME

SOCIAL 20 November 7.30pm Caxton House, St John's Way, Archway, N19. Irish music and refreshments

Delegates fee is £2.50 for employed, £1 for unemployed. Accommodation, creche and refreshments available. Send now to

NLISC, Box BM 4835, London WC1N 3XX

Sponsorship invited from other bodies, committees etc working in support of the Irish struggle

because it is the vanguard of the Irish peoples' struggle for self-determination. Revolutionaries have also never mistaken TOM for a 'provo front'. The belief that by dropping any pretence of support for the Republican movement TOM will win support from sections of the imperialist Labour party has been proved wrong in practice time and again. If the authors have not learnt this from the experience of the last 13 years, surely the failure of TOM's strategy to produce any campaign at all during last

heart of British domination over Ireland. To recognise the legitimacy of the prison struggle is to acknowledge the legitimacy of the revolutionary struggle of the IRA to drive British imperialism out of Ireland. There is no question of Labour MPs and trade union leaders supporting the Irish POWs, many of whom are acknowledged IRA Volunteers, therefore, say our authors, too bad for the POWs! They go on to graciously allow the Irish to give 'humanitarian' support for the POWs if

they wish. But the Irish must keep off British politics! That's a restricted area open only to the superior British middle class socialists who understand such things!

The TOM quartet, by demanding an explicit move into the camp of reactionary Labour opportunism, are only drawing out the logic of what has always been the TOM strategy.

The way forward

The North London Irish Solidarity Committee, an alliance of communists, anti-imperialists and other progressive elements, has called a national conference 'Building an Irish Solidarity Movement' in London on 20 November. Already the support coming in for the conference shows that the answer to the crisis confronting the working class movement in Britain is to make a decisive and explicit turn to the forces of revolution: the oppressed people of Ireland and the most oppressed layers of the British working class.

The clearest evidence of this is the support from Irish POWs in Britain. These comrades, in the forefront of the struggle against imperialism and representing some of the most advanced elements in the national liberation movement, are warmly endorsing the conference and its aims. Gerry McLochlainn, incarcerated in Maidstone prison, writes:

'As unemployed and poorly paid youth in Britain (particularly black youth) begin to tread the same path as we did 14 years ago opportunities open up to demonstrate that our struggles are, in fact, one struggle and our enemy – British imperialism – is one enemy. I call on you therefore to go out from this conference committed to the building of an Irish solidarity movement...which will agitate among British people by street meetings, marches and demonstrations and most of all organise them into a movement which stands with its Irish brothers and sisters and against British imperialism. In so doing you will encourage them to fight for their own rights and freedoms with no illusions in the self-styled "mother of parliaments." Build the Irish Solidarity Movement! Victory to the Irish Republican Movement!'

Another POW writes:

'Imperialism is a world problem. Nations of people must work together to crush it. Should I walk out of this prison tomorrow I would not be free. To live under Thatcher is to live a life with no future. She is the governor of an open prison, full of working class prisoners.'

To date 8 POWs have sponsored the conference and many others have written to indicate their support. Sponsorships grow day by day from Republicans, black comrades and organisations, solidarity committees, TOM branches, members of other left groups and the Labour Party. The response has already proved that there is a growing feeling in Britain that a new type of movement – an anti-imperialist movement – has to be built. The hundreds of people at the conference – communists, anti-imperialists, democrats, Republicans, prisoners' relatives and others – will be given the historic opportunity to help in the building of this new movement in the knowledge that only such a movement united with the revolutionary Irish struggle can build effective solidarity with the Irish people and make real advances in the struggle for the socialist revolution here in Britain.

Build the Irish Solidarity movement!
Victory to the Irish People!
Troops Out Now!

SOUTH AFRICA IN BRIEF

● Stop the hangings – Save the Moroka 3

The Moroka 3 – Marcus Motaung, Jerry Mosololi and Thelle Mogorane – ANC members and fighters with Umkhonto we Sizwe – have been sentenced to death by the apartheid regime. They were charged with carrying out military attacks on Moroka police station and other targets between 1979 and 1981. They were convicted on the basis of 'confessions' extracted under torture. The Moroka 3 have made a direct plea of clemency to the State President. They urgently need support as their death sentences could be carried out immediately. SATIS have called a weekly picket of the South African Embassy, Trafalgar Square, London, on Wednesdays from 1-2pm. FRFI readers and supporters are urged to attend.

● Ten years for ANC membership

Amongst the many political trials in South Africa, the trial and conviction of Barbara Hogan sets a serious precedent. She was charged with high treason and the racist courts gave as their evidence her membership of the ANC. Barbara Hogan, the first white person to be charged and convicted with high treason since World War II, did not conceal her political convictions and admitted being an ANC member. For her commitment to the liberation struggle she was imprisoned for 10 years. Lawyers defending political militants charged before apartheid courts now see this trial as the precedent for making ANC membership an act of treason.

● Apartheid opponents detained and gaoled

In an attempt to destroy the growing revolutionary movement in South Africa, the apartheid courts are charging and sentencing hundreds of anti-apartheid militants to be they ANC members, war resisters or trade unionists. On 22 September 3 ANC members were sentenced to 7 years for undergoing military training and for possessing weapons. On 5 October Bill Paddock, one of an increasing number of war resisters, was sentenced to 1 year when in his own words he courageously refused 'to fight in an unjust war'. Dumile Makanda, former Chairman of the Motor Assembly and Component Workers Union of South Africa, has been charged with contravening his banning orders and possessing banned documents. Dumile Makanda was banned after an 8 month period of detention without trial last year. The apartheid regime's 'law and order' is no more than the legal apparatus it tries to use to destroy the vanguard of the South African liberation and working class movement.

● IMF to loan £690m to South Africa

The fall in the price of one of South Africa's chief exports, gold, together with a massive increase in imports of arms and oil have weakened the South African apartheid economy. Consequently South Africa has requested and received £690m from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – this in spite of the fact that the General Assembly of the United Nations voted by 121 to 3 (US, Britain and West Germany) on a resolution calling on the IMF to refrain from granting credits or other assistance to South Africa.

The condition for the IMF loan will be increased exploitation and oppression of the black people of South Africa. British imperialism will be directly responsible for this oppression: after the US, which has 20% of the vote, Britain is the second most powerful member of the IMF holding 8% of the voting rights in the IMF. Furthermore the significance of the loan lies not just in the figure of £690m but in the fact that it will be a great encouragement to private banks to increase their lending to South Africa: IMF loans indicate both financial security and an endorsement of policy.

SINN FEIN TRIUMPH

continued from page 1

'...variously described by police as common criminals, godfathers, gangsters and mafiosi, [Sinn Fein] appears to have been given precisely the electoral support which security chiefs in the past insisted they did not enjoy.'

Once again the Republican Movement has demonstrated the close unity between the armed Republican Movement and the nationalist working class.

But perhaps the most bitter pill British imperialism had to swallow was the humiliation of the SDLP at the hands of Republican candidates. In West Belfast 3 SDLP candidates could not muster as many votes as one Sinn Fein! The same in Fermanagh-South Tyrone where Austin Currie of the SDLP only

managed 6,800 votes to Owen Carron's 14,025 and had to await many counts before winning a seat. In the first serious challenge the SDLP faced, on their chosen ground of electoral politics, they were humiliated by the Republican Movement. British governments will now find it more difficult to parade the SDLP around as the 'genuine voice of the Catholic community'.

The Tory government will be making every effort to reverse the political defeat it suffered on 20 October. In these efforts it is receiving the ready assistance of the racist and imperialist Labour Party. Merlyn Rees, ex-Labour Party Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, began his campaign of slander against the triumphant Republican Movement. He said:

'Remember the number of people who are dead, remember the number of people who are injured, remember that the Provisional IRA have taken the lead in all this...'

Gerry Adams responded by pointing out that Rees was not only a 'failed politician' but an 'idiot' to boot. He went on to state:

'The people who are terrorists in this country are Mr Rees and, at the moment Mr Prior's troops...Mr Rees is talking about putting people in jail. He has put thousands of people in jail without the benefit of any sort of trial.'

Precisely because British imperialism cannot withdraw, unless driven out of Ireland, it will ignore the wishes of the nationalist community expressed through British imperialist ballot boxes. Such flagrant disregard of 'democratic election' results is nothing new in the history of British imperialism in Ireland. British governments have accepted the results of the ballot box only when these have coincided with their own interests. Otherwise they have just been ignored – for example Ireland 1918, and more recently the elections of Bobby Sands and Owen Carron to Parliament during last year's hunger strike. It is precisely for this reason that the Republican Movement has repeatedly affirmed that the armed struggle of the IRA is the foundation of Ireland's struggle for liberation.

Eddie Abrahams

SOUTH AFRICA

NEST OF SPIES

There is now abundant evidence that the South African apartheid regime is using London as a base for its terrorist activities against anti-apartheid organisations and supporters. In response to the political crisis in South Africa and the growing militancy and success of the liberation movements ANC and SWAPO, the apartheid regime is using its embassy and agents in London to plan operations in order to intimidate exiled ANC members and anti-apartheid activists. On 13 October representatives of the Anti-Apartheid Movement in Britain submitted a memorandum to Home Secretary William Whitelaw citing numerous cases as evidence.

- In March this year a 10lb bomb was planted at the ANC offices in London. It exploded causing extensive damage. This was followed by break-ins at both the ANC and SWAPO offices.
- On 15 April 1982, a meeting was held in London, attended by South African agents, to plan the overthrow of the Angolan government. One of the agents present was Johannes Kemp, a senior officer for NIS (National Intelligence

Service – formerly BOSS). He had previously served as first secretary at the South African embassy in London.

- Following the arrest of three men in connection with the burglaries at the ANC and SWAPO offices, Mr Ben van der Klashorst, another first secretary at the embassy, returned to South Africa very suddenly. Mr van der Klashorst is known to have been involved in collecting information on anti-apartheid sup-

porters.

- The *Sunday Times* recently revealed a plot to overthrow the Seychelles government, planned in a London hotel, involving the destabilisation of the Seychelles by bombing public buildings, to be followed by an invasion of 300 South African mercenaries. The South Africans are known to have been involved in the last attempt to stage a coup in the Seychelles in November 1981.

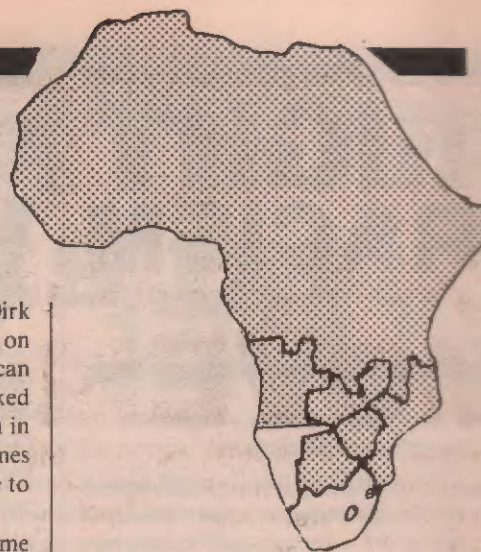
- Warrant Officer Joe Klue, a South African embassy official, was named by *Time Out* magazine as having paid for information about supporters of the Southern African liberation movements.

- The South African embassy official stamp was found on an invoice for armaments in the office of a British arms smuggler, Leonard Hammond. Hammond was recently gaoled for smuggling arms to South Africa. The smuggling operation was on a large scale – one shipment was of 1,000 rifles valued at £20,000. Other charges against Hammond involved shipments of machine gun parts valued at about £1m. Since 1977 there has been a United Nations security council mandatory arms embargo on South Africa. Yet the

South African intelligence colonel Dirk Stofberg, who is said to operate on behalf of Armscor (the South African Armaments agency) and to have worked closely with the smugglers, has been in and out of Britain several times recently. No attempt has been made to arrest him.

The AAM delegation to the Home Secretary called for the termination of the agreement which requires no visas for South African visitors to Britain, stringent control on the entry of South African nationals, and the expulsion of South African agents involved in security police operations. An emergency motion passed at the AAM AGM also called for the closure of the South African embassy. It is clear that the embassy is nothing more than a nest of spies for the racist regime and that it is from here that acts of terror, coercion and intimidation are planned. So far the British government has allowed this to continue with impunity. Their commitment to apartheid necessitates covering up the activities of these racists. There can be no doubt that the movement has to be built to force the closure of this fascist base in Trafalgar Square.

Carol Brown



Letter to non-stop picket from Irish POWs

I pen the following communique as a small gesture of solidarity with the family of Dave Kitson, his friends and supporters, especially those at present engaged in the picket of South Africa House!!

I have sat in solitary confinement for months on end in a white walled cell, completely barren, the bed being removed in the morning, returned at night. Totally alone with my thoughts, at times I have fought to retain my sanity, what one feels at times like this is very hard to relate, but I hope that for a few seconds you would ponder on the sheer despair of nothingness. 'One has nothing' but the thoughts of one's mind (David Kitson is free in the head, the minds of his 'keepers' are in chains).

During my periods out of solitary, I have often found myself enjoying the few luxuries that are possible only to be suddenly halted by the thought that someone somewhere is enduring isolation. This and the 'anger' it engenders is not surprising, since I have experienced isolation, but a protest against imprisonment by those who have not, is something else indeed. To those people I convey 'greetings' from the Irish Prisoners of War and in this case the black prisoners amongst the long term men here. The black prisoners, I am glad to relate, are at present engaged in the process of freeing their minds and are fortified by the example of David Kitson and his family. To the family of David Kitson we say 'without the cold and desolation of winter there would not be the warmth and splendour of spring'. During David's 'downs' he will constantly think of you and most of all he will know that those he loves have stood with him, we hope that to David you say 'you do not stand alone'. Circumstances do not permit anything larger than this note, this having been penned at short notice and in a rush. I ask to end as one preoccupied with reality, idealism is about how things are supposed to be, and realism is about how things are in reality. The former tells the latter just how sick and wrong things really are!!

Solidarity
PRO Irish Political Prisoners in
Bondage
Wormwood Scrubs

REPLY

Dear PRO Political Prisoners,
Your letter was read out at our Picket University and was received with an ovation and many messages of solidarity. It was very heartening to receive your letter.
The conditions of political prisoners all over the world seem to be the same and it is true that their heads are free and those of the 'keepers' are in chains.
You may be in solitary but you are never alone.
Solidarity in the Struggle from
The Picket Outside South Africa House

continued from page 1

taking on all kinds of responsibilities. A rota has now been organised to make sure the picket is covered evenly throughout the week. FRFI urges all its readers to go to the picket and get their names in the picket book stating when they can attend. Meanwhile the political life of the picket continues to revolve around open democratic meetings on the picket and the picket university. It is here that plans are made and progress reports given and it is here that people learn from each other about both political history and practical

'It won't do any good'. I've heard hundreds of times from people as they walk past the picket. When it is raining and you are cold the weather is your greatest enemy. It is the feeling you get from the people who go by – they can make you feel wonderful or they can make you feel our struggle is in vain. We have won a great victory and we know how to answer the people who say it won't do any good. I feel happy, elated and strong. No one can take that from us.

Richard

steps in the anti-imperialist struggle. Some recent highpoints have been discussions on the AAM National Conference, the armed struggle in South Africa and police harassment in Britain. Nearly all the picketers who took part in that last discussion related their own experiences at the hands of the racist British police force. The picket was given a great boost when Newton Rose (framed and then later acquitted for the murder of an NF sympathiser) visited and made a speech of support for the picket. Also the brother of an Irish POW came and read out a letter of support from his brother in which he

I don't quite know what to say because I'm still in a state of euphoria! I guess I can now admit that there have been times when I wondered if we would get anywhere soon and I'm so glad I've been proved wrong! All the fascist abuse and police harassment amounts to NOTHING in the face of this victory! All the people who said we wouldn't gain anything are WRONG.

The whole picket – the whole struggle – will win – Mandela. Sisulu – all of you, we stand by you. We have just begun.

Charine



David Kitson and other prisoners moved

Victory for non-stop picket!

told of his experience of solitary confinement, brutality and resistance in the hell-holes of British jails. This letter received enthusiastic applause from the whole picket.

And while picketers sing the freedom songs, chant the slogans and even dance around the pavement, the police have looked on impotently and have hung back

I went to an IMG (International Marxist Group) meeting and Ernest Mandel (leader of the middle class socialist 'Fourth International' – FRFI) was there. I asked him to sign a petition and he said 'it would do no bloody good' and 'Go away'. The picket has done really good and I'm really happy about it.

Colin

The moral boost on the picket is tremendous and the effect we've had on the British public, British government and the fascist rulers in South Africa goes to show that a handful of a population can rock and scare powerful forces.
We'll win because we believe we will, and our faith in ourselves and others is spreading worldwide – people are becoming aware of the brutal situations around the world and are shocked – so shocked they are now screaming against regimes like apartheid.

Billy

from mounting further attacks. The five cases so far won in the courts have shown them up for what they are – defenders of the apartheid state and of imperialist interests in South Africa, racists and oppressors, who will always attempt to suppress democratic rights. The picketers have shown that only a vigorous and determined defence of those rights can defeat the police, and that the only democratic rights you have are those you fight for.

The picket has shown beyond doubt where the future lies. When Zola Zembe, treasurer of the South African Congress

of Trade Unions (SACTU), spoke at the picket university he told the youth 'Remember, what you are doing here is very important – for you are the future.' The many people who have joined the picket, in particular the youth – black and white, and the unemployed, have demonstrated that they are prepared to help build the movement in support of the ANC and South African political prisoners.

Release all South African political prisoners!
Victory to the ANC!

Gerald Johnson

PICKET SOCIAL

One of the most important events on our non-stop picket was the social and cultural event organised by the youth on 23 October to raise funds for the ANC Youth Section.

The evening, attended by 150 people, was a tremendous success. The Disco and band were punctuated by freedom songs from the picketers and supporters, with the band accompanying. All in all, the evening raised £200 for the ANC Youth Section – tickets were completely sold out – and we were delighted to have ANC representatives join with us for what turned out to be a superb evening of fun as well as politics.

Charine John

DUNDEE 24 HOUR PICKET

in solidarity with South
African Political Prisoners
Saturday 27 November
Begins 8am City Square
All welcome. Bring banners etc.
All interested in helping to organise
picket contact FRFI paper sellers.

FIGHT RACISM IN BRIEF

● No Deportation — Defend Josephine Thomas

Josephine Thomas, a West Indian woman from Huddersfield is under threat of deportation. In November 1976 Josephine had to return to Grenada to look after her seriously ill mother. In 1979 she arrived back in Britain intending to resume her life here and save up enough money to bring back her British-born sons. However, the racist Home Office refused Josephine's application to resume her permanent residence. Her appeal against this was rejected. Representations to the Minister of Immigration, Timothy Raison, by Josephine's MP met with the same refusal. Mrs Thomas's situation is made worse by the fact that she is receiving medical treatment for an illness she contracted by working with dangerous chemicals in a local works. The Josephine Thomas Support Committee has been set up to fight this deportation. They need your support! Send messages of support, donations and requests for more information to Josephine Thomas Support Committee, 54 Deighton Rd. Huddersfield HD2 2UF. Jenefer Thomas

● Protest over divided families

On Saturday 15 November at 8pm supporters of the Bangladeshi Divided Families Campaign will be holding a 48 hour Mass Fast. The fast will take place in St Peter's Square, Manchester and has been called to publicise the splitting up of Bangladeshi families by the Home Office. The campaign includes 50 families who have been split up by racist immigration controls. Some have been fighting for 10 years to get husbands, wives or children into Britain. Investigations by Manchester Law Centre and other bodies, involving visits to Bangladesh, prove that in over 70% of cases where appeals have failed there is a genuine legal right to settle in Britain. But the Home Office continues to deny that right. The Campaign is calling for the widest support for its struggle against the racist Home Office.

● Defend the Khan and Kaur families!

On Saturday 30 October Manchester FRFI attended a 300-strong demonstration to defend two families under threat of deportation. The Khan family has faced this threat for almost a year. In consequence Shaukat Khan has been forced into hiding. The other family threatened is that of Manjig Kaur and her son Pal Binder. Manjig left her husband Santokh due to family problems. The Home Office says he is 'illegal' and therefore, that Manjig is also 'illegal'.

Give your support! Contact Khan and Kaur Families Defence Committee c/o 593 Stockport Road, Manchester 12. Phone 061 — 225 — 5111 MF

● New Worker — Old Racism

The reaction of the *New Worker* (5/11/82) to the recent events in Brixton exposes the abject and filthy racism of the NCP. Vying with the gutter *Sun*, Dick Geldhart writes:

'To pay for their vices, young black males engage in violent street crime, their sisters in prostitution.'

It sounds like the National Front doesn't it? Amidst talk of the 'lunacies of Rastafarianism' this foul-mouthed racist continues:

'...all those in the area who have not sunk to the very pits saw last night's naked display of the power of the state as at worst a necessary evil.'

Whilst insulting the black youth of Brixton he says not one word against the police. Indeed, Geldhart finds that: 'even the efforts of the Tory-dominated local council are essentially well-meaning.' It is the *New Worker* which has sunk to the very pits — the pits of racism and imperialism. There they will rot. MF

Leeds Precinct 6 Campaign

WE SHALL WIN!

This was the message from supporters of the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign in Leeds after the acquittal in Leeds Magistrates Court on 13 October of Mohan Pipial, Garvey Harris and Les Haw on charges of 'threatening and abusive behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace'. Garvey Harris was also cleared on an additional charge of 'criminal damage to a police van'.

The arrests took place on Saturday 21 August, when after a demonstration supporters of the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign went into Lands Lane precinct to hand out leaflets and to sell copies of FRFI. They were standing around the fountain in the precinct when two policemen told them to sit down or move on. They say down but Mohan Pipial was grabbed by a policeman and arrested. Garvey Harris, a black youth and one of the campaign organisers, was also arrested. Les Haw was set on by four policemen who forced him to the ground, causing him to have an epileptic fit.

Police liars

In the court the police 'evidence' was packed with lies. PCs Gill and Hewitt, who arrested Mohan Pipial, claimed that Mohan had been swearing and chanting and had prodded them several times. Yet none of the witnesses had seen or heard this. The police who arrested Les Haw claimed that he had used obscene language, had tried to incite the youth to attack the police and had 'faked' an epileptic fit.

PC Raaj who arrested Garvey Harris, invented a fantastic tale of how Garvey had been the leader of a group of chanting youth who had 'lunged' at him. PC Raaj claimed that at this point an old woman had appeared and complained about the youth. He had then arrested Garvey and in the meantime the 'lunging' youth had miraculously vanished. In fact, as none of the other policemen or witnesses had seen this group of youth, it must be assumed that PC Raaj suffers from hallucinations. In the course of his arrest Garvey suffered a perforated eardrum.



Summing up after the three day trial, the defence barrister said that the hostility of the police towards the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign was shown by the way that they had trailed some of the supporters of the campaign into a cafe and from there to the Precinct area. It was no accident that the three who had been arrested were centrally involved in the campaign. What was on trial was the right to organise political protests, including protests against police harassment. With the prosecution case in tatters, the Magistrates had no choice but to find the defendants not guilty.

Police vengeance

In the course of the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign, Mohan Pipial and Les Haw have been singled out and arrested three times. Mohan has spent 17 days on remand in Thorp Arch. In the first trial Mohan and Les were found guilty of 'threatening and abusive behaviour'. Mohan was sentenced to three months in detention centre and Les to six weeks in prison — both have got bail and are appealing. The vigorous defence campaign has subsequently forced acquittals on all other charges which have been

heard except that of flyposting. But now in their latest vindictive move against Mohan, Leeds police have charged him with 'actual bodily harm' for an incident on 7 July in which Mohan was attacked by a fascist and defended himself. This fascist is known to be responsible for the stabbing of a black youth, Darren Brown, on 3 July when over a hundred fascists roamed around Leeds City centre and slashed up a total of five youth. The date of Mohan's trial still has to be fixed, but the police have shown that they are desperately determined to put Mohan behind bars and make an example of him.

Police harassment

Supporters of the campaign who mounted a picket outside the court were first told that they would be arrested if they chanted any slogans and then that to picket would lead to arrests. This is in line with the persistent police harassment of marches, street meetings and newspaper selling. The police are trying to censor all opposition. But the campaign has fought back. So when Leeds police banned a march through Chapel-town called for 9 October, Precinct 6 supporters immediately contacted local councillors, and County Councillor Speck in Bradford took the matter up with Chief Constable Ronald Gregory. The police have now backed down and have said that a march can now take place.

Youth lead the fightback

Anti-racist youth in Leeds have given a lot of support to the campaign and shown that despite all the arrests they will not be frightened off. One youth said:

'I have had police harassment for years because I am a white boy who hangs around with blacks and Asians nearly all the time. I think all coppers are racists not excluding any. It's not

true that you can't fight back against the police. You *can* win, we *are* winning. It is not on for people to be arrested just for walking the street or selling papers. You have got to get together, organise and let people know what is happening. If you shout loud enough people will hear.'

A black youth who supports the campaign said:

'If we don't fight back we get mashed. There is no future for black or white man in this system. The ruling class want us as slaves and servants. Well those days are done for black and white. Now we must unite, fight for our rights, smash this backward system and build a better one.'

The Precinct 6 Petition has got over 3,000 signatures and among those who have signed the public statement are Tarlochan Gata-aura (one of the Bradford 12), the Islamic Youth Movement in Leeds, and Leeds Labour Councillor Neil Taggart.

The next trial takes place on 29 November when Chas Andrews, Tony Lally and Les Haw are up for obstruction.

Give your support now!

Send DONATIONS, messages of support and requests for petitions and leaflets to The Precinct 6 Defence Campaign, c/o LAP, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2

Send a letter of protest to the Chief Constable, Ronald Gregory, West Yorkshire Metropolitan Police, Police HQ, Laburnham Road, Wakefield, Yorkshire.

MONEY IS URGENTLY NEEDED TO PAY OFF THE FINES AND TO PAY FOR THE WHOLE CAMPAIGN.

Make cheques and POs payable to the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign c/o LAP, 59 Cookridge St, Leeds 2

Garvey, Tim and David, for the Precinct 6 Defence Campaign

BRADFORD POLICE CONSPIRACY

Bradford police have a long and infamous history of framing black people. George Lindo and the Bradford 12 had to fight long campaigns to secure justice, often after months and months of wrongful imprisonment. Lanre and Linda Fehintola are the latest victims of the police.

On 9 July Lanre was out jogging when he was pulled in by the police for questioning. He was later charged with 'burglary with intent to steal'. On the morning of Monday 20 September, a large force of police arrived at Lanre's house and demanded that he accompany them to the police station. Lanre asked for an explanation. As the police gave none, Lanre ended the conversation, locked the door and went inside. Such was the determination of the police to get Lanre that they smashed the door down, and punched and kicked their way into the house. Lanre and his sister were assaulted by the police until Lanre was handcuffed and pinned to the ground. Lanre's wife Linda, arrived home from the shops to find Lanre being dragged away. Linda protested at their brutality and was herself arrested and charged with assaulting a police

officer and obstruction of a police officer. Lanre himself was subsequently charged with burglary and theft, and with assaulting police. He was remanded in custody to Armley Prison for a week.

To fight this vicious police conspiracy to frame Lanre and Linda a defence committee has been formed. Leaflets and posters have been produced, telling the people of Bradford about the case and calling for all the charges to be dropped. FRFI sends its full support to the campaign and adds its voice to the demands:

**Stop police frame-ups!
Drop the charges now!**

You can contact the campaign at: Lanre and Linda Fehintola Defence Committee, c/o 16, Blenheim Rd. Bradford.

Jenefer Thomas

NEWHAM 8

Asian children at Little Ilford School were continuously harassed and racially attacked. On Friday 24 September these attacks reached a climax when 8 Asian youths were arrested in Dersingham Avenue Manor Park.

One week earlier an 11 year old Asian boy was threatened in the playground of his school by 15 white youths who were armed with sticks, iron bars, bottles; one had a knife. Fights developed and this resulted in the arrest of 3 Asian youths.

An Asian youth was so badly beaten up on Monday 20 September at morning playtime in the playground by white youths from a different school that he had to be taken to hospital. On Wednesday 22 September the Asian youths were again threatened by racists armed with sticks and one with a knife.

On Friday 24 September about 15 Asian youth waited outside to protect the schoolchildren. This was very effective and no white youths turned up. However, a car suddenly drew up and 3 men got out and attacked some of the Asians, while the other Asians dispersed. The white men had weapons in their hands, and a fight developed.

Then, soon after, a police dog van arrived and all of a sudden the area was teeming with police. About 40 in all turned up. As the 8 Asian youths were arrested it turned out that their attack-

ers were plainclothes policemen.

The Asian youths were kicked, punched and subjected to racial abuse by the police in police vans and in the police station. One of the youths was punched and slapped and called a 'fucking cheeky bastard' in the presence of the other youths.

The youths have been charged with serious offences ranging from threatening behaviour to actual bodily harm. One of the Asian youths had to go to hospital because of his injuries.

This latest incident is part of a wider scene involving continual attacks and racial harassment of the black community of Newham.

The campaign also intends to organise a picket of the court hearing at West Ham Magistrates Court, West Ham Lane, Stratford on 5 November at 10am, and is calling for the widest support.

**Defend the Newham 8!
Drop the charges!
Stop police harassment!
Drop the charges now!**

Shahid Rafiq

BRIXTON

Kenneth Newman launches his first attack

On Monday 1 November the police launched a massive invasion of the Railton Road area of Brixton, masterminded by the new chief of London police, Sir Kenneth Newman. At 2am bailiffs and police moved in to evict squatters from the last remaining buildings in Railton Road, locally known as the 'frontline'. 60 police were used at 5.30am to finally effect the eviction while 400 more waited in reserve in side streets.

By 11am 200 people, mostly black youth, had congregated in Railton Road, 80 of whom marched up to Lambeth Town Hall to protest formally to the council about the massive police presence and police harassment. On arrival the people were prevented from entering by lines of police 3 deep sealing off all entrances, whereupon everyone returned to Railton Road quite peacefully.

The people then erected barricades in Railton Road and adjoining streets to keep the police out of the area. At 2pm the police gathered 300 strong at the far end of Railton Road, but the barricades prevented them from entering. These were followed an hour later by another convoy of better equipped vans complete with special grids on the front used only for the purpose of smashing through barricades. These vans were duly attacked with great force by the black youth who could equally match the police in numbers: they managed to force the police to retreat again defeated!

At 5.45 the police pulled out completely from Railton Road and stayed in the Town Hall/Brixton Road area. Only a few police dotted around Atlantic Road were visible. At the other end of Railton Road things were really heating up; the Lambeth Council building site and 2 site huts were petrol bombed and destroyed by fire; the building site occupies what used to be Mayall Road. Fire engines were called but could not get through because of the barricades and the well organised crowd.

At 7pm the police sent in the 'heavies', the new Immediate Response Unit, in

Later that evening if anyone tried to go into Railton Road they were stopped and searched and questioned and re-directed. Absolutely nothing and no-one could get near Railton Road until the next morning when the restrictions were lifted.



Brutal arrests in Brixton

special riot gear which was: crash helmets with full visors, fire-proof unnumbered overalls with 'Police' on the front, small round shields and large batons. Their vehicles were equally sinister, with heavy grids on all windows and a sliding shield on each side of the van. Around the bottom was a wooden 'skirt' to prevent anything from getting underneath.

Inside the vans were the usual riot shields and road block equipment which was brought out at 8.30pm and from then onwards Railton Road was declared a no go area and swamped by about 600 police: only then were people dispersed. Furthermore in at least 2 vans plastic bullet/tear gas guns were seen, although these were not used.

These events were not principally about evictions but about the police moving in to force the youth to accept their rule and their vicious authority. When an FRFI supporter, who is black, was arrested, he was told by the police 'now we are in charge, not you'. The police were given the go ahead for this by the new chief of police, Sir Kenneth Newman, who is bringing the tactics of terror which he used against the Irish people into use against the black community in London. However, these events have shown that the people are not afraid to fight back with the same courage as shown last year.

Karen Freeman

National Union of Seamen

racist levy

The Guardian newspaper recently shed some light on the murky affairs of the National Union of Seamen. It revealed that the NUS has accepted for several years an annual payment from the shipowners for each Asian seaman employed on British ships. The Asian seamen are paid less than a quarter of the wages of a British seaman. This scandalous and racist levy now stands at £30 per Asian seaman and last year brought £200,000 into the NUS coffers.

Imagine this—a trade union which receives a massive subsidy from the employers and receives it moreover for allowing the employers to discriminate against black seamen and employ them in slave-like conditions.

This despicable arrangement saved the employers £50m last year—that is

what it would have cost to pay the Asian seamen NUS rates. The £200,000 blood money which the shipowners paid to the NUS last year also saved the union from insolvency. So keen are the shipowners to keep the NUS afloat that when the union ran out of money, the employers bailed them out by increasing the levy from £20 to £30 per Asian employed. The NUS gets this money in return for keeping quiet about the appalling pay of Asian seamen and also for excluding them from the NUS. As a result there are 6,000 non-British seamen employed on British ships on pay rates of £78 per month and with no union organisation.

What more vivid example could there be of the moral and political bankruptcy of the British trade union movement? And of its racist and reactionary character.

The NUS has always tolerated racist discrimination against non-British seamen. But when, in the 1970s, jobs began to decline, the NUS started to push a 'jobs for British seamen first' line. The employers were faced with a prospect of having to pay full NUS rates if British ships were to be fully crewed by British seamen. Hence the deal. Of course it was all covered up with fine words about the NUS using the money to fight for better pay for Asian seamen and the employers promising to improve their pay etc. This was mere trickery designed to cover up the fact that the racist NUS had sold itself body and soul to the employers for £200,000 per year. And had used the sweat and suffering of Asian seamen as its bargaining point.

The result is that the pay and conditions of the Asian seamen have, if anything, deteriorated over the years that the NUS has been receiving its racist levy.

The consequences of the racist rot were very clear during the Malvinas war. The NUS leaders foamed at the mouth in patriotic glee. They also struck yet another deal with the employers. All ships going to the war were to be manned by British NUS seamen. Except one. The Uganda was allowed to have 124 Asians employed on it. Why? Because its conditions were so bad that it was held to be unfit for British seamen. So 124 Asians sweated on the ship for 15% of the pay NUS members were getting on other ships. With the union's blessing. And the NUS said that this was not discrimination, just that 'we had negotiated better conditions for British seamen than were available on the Uganda.'

How disgusting. The last thing that ever occurs to the NUS is that it should fight the employers and their ruthless exploitation by fighting for and alongside the Asian seamen. But fighting is obviously alien to these spineless creatures that lead the NUS. And the results are clear. On 3 November 8 Asians who were demanding higher pay were removed from a ship in Liverpool docks and ordered to be deported. The NUS 'intervened'. The Asian seamen were duly deported. With the NUS intervening for them they were lucky not to have been thrown overboard.

Maxine Williams

CROXTETH fights on!

Croxteth Comprehensive School has now passed a milestone, with the start of its second half-term as a functioning Community School under the control of the parents and pupils occupying it. The half-term holiday was a critical time, as the school was relatively empty of pupils. MANWEB electricity board made two attempts that week to cut off the electricity supply, which had become reconnected. But the pickets rallied round at short notice to block their way.

On the second occasion two managers arrived, disguised in overalls, after union members had refused to have any part in cutting the supply. But they too were sent back to their office, mission unaccomplished. Now MANWEB has promised to take no further action until the City Council has discussed the issue.

Another victory was won that week with the Council Education Committee reversing their previous decision to refuse free school meals to Croxteth pupils entitled to them, although this reversal has still to be ratified by a full Council meeting.

Through these victories, but most of all through the ever more efficient functioning of the school by the efforts of the Action Committee and the volunteer teachers, Croxteth School serves as an inspiration to all the other schools in Liverpool and elsewhere threatened with closure. The community has provided everything from continual 24-hour pickets to school meals; from cleaners to caretakers; from electricians to joiners.

They have shown that working-class demands can be won through determined effort and organisation, against all the forces of the state.

Now the Action Committee, together with the kids and teachers are turning their efforts towards gaining even more community support from Croxteth and throughout Liverpool. A start has been made with the publication of a weekly newsletter *Crocky News* to print the truth which is censored from the racist and reactionary *Liverpool Post* and *Echo*.

● **URGENT APPEAL FOR VOLUNTEER TEACHERS.** Any teachers or others (eg graduates) in Merseyside area who could help out on a regular full- or part-time basis should contact: Croxteth Community Action Committee, c/o 45 Finch Rd, Liverpool 14.

● All donations, messages of support also to this address.

Jennifer Tait

FRAME UP DEFEATED

Merseyside police have suffered two blows against their attempts to frame the victims of their vicious attacks during the July 1981 uprisings. Kenneth Anderson and Paul Conroy were both acquitted at their retrials in October.

FRFI readers will remember that Paul's back was broken in two places by a police landrover which crushed him against a wall—the same tactic which killed David Moore. Paul put in a claim for compensation, but in September 1981 he was taken away from his hospital bed—still encased in plaster—to be charged with petrol-bombing, affray and possession of an offensive weapon. At his trial in March 1982 he was acquitted of petrol-bombing, but the jury could not agree on the other two charges.

Kenneth was one of the two people nearly killed by CS gas shells—the other being Phil Robins. Like Paul, Kenneth was making his way home after a night of drinking, when he found himself caught up in the fighting. He received a CS gas shell in his thigh which exploded inside his flesh like a dum-dum bullet, destroying part of his muscle. He still walks with the aid of a stick. He was charged with five counts of rioting, but at his earlier five-week trial in Liverpool the jury could reach no verdict. Both Kenneth and Paul were sent outside Liverpool for retrial, evidently in the expectation that less sympathetic juries would bring in the guilty verdicts the police needed.

In both cases the police tried to make their lies convincing by sheer repetition. At Paul's retrial in Birkenhead, 15 police witnesses were brought in to testify against him. Their prize exhibit was one Inspector Stuart—now a community bobby who had evidently undergone an operation to implant a permanent false grin on his face. His evidence was so discredited by a defence witness that the judge was forced to advise the jury that it was up to them to decide 'whether Inspector Stuart is really the smiling Scotsman, or whether he has horns and

a tail.' The jury made their decision and Paul was cleared on both charges.

Kenneth's retrial was taken even further away—to Mold in North Wales. But this did the police no good as their evidence was so weak and contradictory that the defence did not even bother to call any of their own witnesses. The police claimed that Kenneth was the 'petrol-bomber' they had watched, who was wearing a blue top and camouflage trousers. They made no attempt to explain how it was that Kenneth was wearing blue jeans and a red jumper when he arrived at the hospital having been shot. They also could not explain how Kenneth came to have ten broken ribs on his left-hand side—although Sergeant Reilly, for instance, repeatedly stated that he had watched Kenneth like a hawk until the time he was taken behind police lines. The jury was not taken in by police lies and Kenneth walked free from the court.

Now a further call has been made by the *New Statesman* for an inquiry into the use of CS gas in Liverpool 8. A US ballistics expert has shown that both Kenny Anderson and Phil Robins were the victims of 'direct hits'. The police have, all along, claimed they were wounded by 'ricochet'. The *New Statesman* also reveals the police conspiracy to cover up the fact that they shot directly at people, aiming to maim and kill. The police have obstructed investigation into this in every possible way.

But despite all the efforts of the police, they have failed in two of their attempts to criminalise and discredit their victims. The fight is not over even for these two men. Now both are pursuing their claims for compensation with renewed vigour.

Liverpool Correspondent



● Who killed the cat?

Police Superintendent Michael Heaton, of Penwortham, Preston, accused his neighbour PC Derek Rimmer of poisoning his tabby kitten. The sleuthful super had got his vet to do a post-mortem on his cat and took fingerprints off a dish he had found in PC Rimmer's garden. Armed with this evidence he confronted PC Rimmer – 'I'll nail you!' said the super, 'get all these trees cut down by 12 o'clock or I'll cut them down' – to which PC Rimmer replied 'touch them trees and I'll cut you in half'.

PC Rimmer was found guilty, however, under the 1911 Protection of Animals Act (no, not because he threatened Superintendent Heaton) but was given an absolute discharge when it was learned a conviction would affect his pension. The intelligent PC Rimmer had put down the poison merely to frighten cats and rambled on about catching rats and seeing squirrels etc.

● Who killed the pig?

Lord Dunpark told Strathclyde PC Raymond Park that had he been found guilty of the culpable homicide of his colleague PC David Macbride 'he would have taken the unusual step of admonishing him!'. PC Park and a group of other policemen and women from Strathclyde had been sampling the delights of the distilleries, hotels and public houses of the Perth area beginning at 10.30am and eventually erupting into a drunken brawl on the streets of Perth at around 4pm. PC Park was accused of throwing PC Macbride in front of a lorry after a fight and chase. Public witnesses testified to seeing a man chase another man and throw him under a lorry but Park denied he was the man. PC Park, who broke down in court, denied discussing the case with colleagues and concocting a story, despite the fact that after an ambulance had been phoned by a member of the public, they had all retired to Perth police canteen, presumably to sober up. The jury found him not guilty of culpable homicide and also despite the self-confessed talk of fighting and swearing and falling around the streets, not guilty of even a breach of the peace!

● Untrustworthy minority

The Observer newspaper has obtained a London police handbook entitled 'The Constable's Instruction Book', which instructs police to regard all 17-20 year old youth as criminals, to be 'specially watched', specially harassed, and always searched if seen carrying bags in the early hours. 'Persons under 30 commit a substantial proportion of petty theft and theft of cars', it states, 'which form such a large part of crime as a whole'. Recent police file investigations however, indicate that the police should keep those eagle eyes peeled for a more troublesome minority, commonly dressed in blue uniforms, big black boots, who appear to be responsible for an equally 'substantial proportion' of petty theft and worse.

One alert constable for example, was patrolling a factory district when he spotted a bicycle with a jemmy in the saddlebag. Upon investigating he discovered PC Wayne Colebrook (aged under 30!) undertaking a little private enterprise of his own and stealing £115 in cash. PC Colebrook has admitted burglary, and been remanded for medical reports, the poor man.

NOTES and COMMENTS.

■ Arlington House Strike

Arlington House is the largest men's hostel in the country. It houses 1,200 men in 'rooms' measuring 8 x 9ft, costing £13 per week. The owners of Arlington House, Rowton Hotels Ltd, also own 2 other hostels in London and one in Birmingham. It regularly makes huge profits from homeless men, its last profit after tax being £1.4m.

The company employs about 60 staff in Arlington House, all of whom live in and earn pitifully low wages of about £30 per week for 60 hours. Some earn even less. Last May a union was formed in Arlington House as a branch of the TGWU after much opposition from the management. The union was recently involved in pay negotiations with the company. The negotiations broke down resulting in a strike by the staff.

The company's response was to sack all the strikers and also to throw them out of their accommodation onto the street. The union got a High Court injunction preventing the company from evicting the strikers. The company has responded by taking action in the County Court to get the staff out. They have also begun employing scab labour and have shown their contempt for the agreement reached between the union and themselves by breaking every clause of it.

The Arlington House strikers need your support if they are to win against this reactionary company. Send donations and messages of support to 'Arlington House Strike Committee', Labour Party Rooms, Bayham Street, London NW1.
Joe Foley, TGWU member

■ Unemployment in USA

McKeesport USA is in Monogahela Valley, known also as Steel Valley. Here, in the traditional centre of the United States steel industry a new movement of the unemployed is emerging, the Mon Valley Unemployed Committee (MVUC). Originally called the Mon Valley Steelworkers Committee, the organisation soon realised that it was fighting not only the steel bosses but the entire capitalist class.

With 100,000 steelworkers laid off in the last two years the entire area, once prosperous, has been devastated by a 21% unemployment rate. The original unemployed steelworkers committees have been extended to include the food-bank committee providing a daily meal for impoverished unemployed workers, the mortgage-save homes committee, and the legislative committee which organises demonstrations and the necessary string of fund-raising events to keep the food banks running and meet increasing demand.

A MVUC rally on 6 October at McKeesport was supported by all sections of the oppressed and working class. Its sponsors included a coalition of trades unionists from about 25 local branches, the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured Peoples, Veterans of the Vietnam War, Youth Movement for Jobs and Welfare Rights Organisations among others. The fighting spirit of the rally was displayed in banners declaring 'Reagan smile while you can; Remember the Shah of Iran'. One of the speakers at the rally hit the nail on the head declaring 'We have been forced into a fight, a war with the rich right here in our own country.'

The experience of Mon Valley is rapidly spreading throughout the USA where once relatively prosperous sections of the working class are being reduced to poverty and can survive only by engaging in 'a war with the rich here in our own country'. Quite apart from the steelworkers other sections of American workers are being thrown ruthlessly out of jobs. Texas, heart of the Sun-belt boom of modern electronic and technical industries, now has 8.4% unemployment. The construction industry has 22.6% and the manufacturing sector 13.8% jobless workers. The public sector, which in privately owned America is much smaller than in Britain, is catching up with the rest

at 10.7% unemployment. 11.3 million workers are unemployed in the USA and 6.6m have only part-time work. In addition, there are 'officially' 1.6m 'discouraged' workers, those who have given up all hope of finding work. This includes an increase of 120,000 in the last six months, all of whom are women.

But it is the black working class which has been hardest hit by the devastating effects of the capitalist crisis in the USA. The official unemployment rate for black Americans is 20.2% – exactly twice the national average of 10.1%. 'Officially' 48.5% of black teenagers are unemployed but community workers believe that 60% is a more realistic estimate. The average family income for whites is \$23,520, while for the black family it is \$13,270. It is no surprise therefore that 32.5% of black families live below the poverty line, while the figure is 10.2% for whites (virtually the same as the unemployment rate.)

As if to affirm to its populace that the profit motive is the only motive that moves American society, Congress has just passed legislation that will deny jobless benefits (dole) to 400,000 people. At the same time Congress has taken away the right of states to pay an additional 13 weeks benefit over the standard 39 weeks dole, which has meant that at least 10 states may no longer carry out their extended benefit programmes. Such is one aspect of the 'land of hope and glory'!
Susan Davidson

■ Racism in West Germany

A registry office in Hanover, West Germany, recently refused a marriage licence to a 42 year old German woman and a Moroccan man. The reason given was that he was 11 years younger than the woman. The registry office was implementing a new piece of racist legislation in the federal state of Lower-Saxony which is specifically designed to prevent marriages between Germans and non-EEC (ie mainly Turkish and Arabic) foreign workers. By means of such legislation the federal government is hoping to reduce the number of non-European workers with rights of residence in West Germany. Under the new legislation a marriage can be prevented by the registrar if a) the couple have a language problem or have no common language, b) if there is an 'extraordinary age gap' between the couple and c) if the couple gives the impression that their marriage is particularly urgent, for example in the case of pregnancy. In other words virtually any marriage between a German and a non-European worker can be stopped. Already in the first four months of this year 40 marriages in one state alone have been stopped – this accounts for 30% of all German and non-European marriages.

Christiana Vogt

■ Greedy pigs bite hand that feeds them

2,000 Metropolitan policemen jeered and booed Home Secretary William Whitelaw at a Police Federation meeting on 20 October. Whitelaw was caught unawares by this display of ingratitude on their part. After all, under 3½ years of Tory government the police have received unprecedented treatment: their pay has increased at a rate only dreamed of by the working class. There was the 40% increase beginning in 1979: 13.5% in 1979; 21.3% in 1980; 13.2% in 1981 and 10.3% in 1982. What these figures mean is that a young London policeman starting out gets a basic (ie excluding overtime) of £9,157 plus a rent subsidy (or free house) of between £1,240 and £2,271. Such luxury for the thugs in blue contrasts sickeningly to Thatcher's arrogant dismissal of the health workers' claim.

So why did the yobboes of the infamous Met howl Whitelaw down? One reason was because they'd been asked to contribute 4% of their latest pay rise to their own inflation-proof pensions (still making their con-

tribution rate lower than for any public sector workers).

Even more significant of the fascist mentality of these London bully boys was the slow hand clap they gave Sir Kenneth Newman – the new head of the Met. As is well known, Newman's period as RUC chief in the North of Ireland was one of unparalleled torture and terror against the nationalist population. His selection by the Tory government has been strictly for the purpose of applying these same methods on the streets of London, particularly against the black communities. Yet the mere mouthing of the hypocritical phrase 'sensitive policing' in relation to black areas by Newman was greeted by a slow handclap. It is clear that these overpaid thugs are not even satisfied by Newman's record for cruelty and terror. Who do they want? Hitler?

Olivia Adamson

■ British monopolies biggest in Europe

Figures recently published in *The Financial Times* show the power of British imperialism compared to its European partners. Out of the 500 largest companies in Europe, some 234 are British. The nearest competitor is imperialist Germany with 78 companies, followed by France with 49, Switzerland with 30 and Italy with 27.

The list is headed by the two oil companies Shell (jointly owned with the Dutch imperialists) and BP. It shows that Britain has the largest electrical companies (GEC, Racal, and Plessey); the largest stores (Marks and Spencer, Great Universal); the biggest mining groups (RTZ, Consolidated Goldfields – both accomplices of apartheid); the biggest food manufacturer (Unilever – which has exploited West Africa for decades); the biggest pharmaceutical companies (Beechams and Glaxo); the largest tobacco firms (BAT and the Imperial Group). Britain also has the most profitable banks (Barclays, Natwest, Lloyds); the biggest property company (Land Securities); the largest brewers (Bass, Distillers); the biggest Life Insurance company (Prudential) and the largest chemical company (ICI).

Clearly the stories peddled about Britain being a 'colony' by petit-bourgeois socialists are just a pack of lies.

A Green

■ Fascists – in two types of uniform

On Saturday 23 October, Movements Disco, organised by London Gay Workshops, was attacked by Skinheads. This follows previous incidents when gays have been attacked outside the Disco and on the underground, not to mention having to contend with anti-gay verbal abuse and Fascist salutes.

Saturday's incident began with bottles being thrown from an adjoining bar into the gay disco, hitting two people. The Management refused to act upon this, saying it could be dealt with internally. But not long after, further bottles were thrown along with comments about 'f...ing queers'. The police were eventually called in by the Management when tables, chairs, etc., were being smashed up by the skinheads.

Interestingly, it was not just the 'skins' who were forcibly evicted from the premises by the 30-odd policemen, police women and plain clothed policemen. Ostensibly under 'police protection', the gay men and women in the disco were aggressively hustled out into the street. Undisguised hostility and contempt was evident in the police handling of the situation. Gays were referred to as 'boys' in a put-down manner, comments such as 'I'm watching my back sir, what with all these poufs about' were made by police inside the disco while outside, others such as 'We don't want any gross indecency here' (to two men holding hands) were as rife. When London Gay Workshops members were making sure

that people left in groups, they were also ordered to leave by the police with the comment – 'We're the organisers now'.

London Gay Workshops Collective is considering what their next move as far as the disco, a fund-raising event for their own projects and for other gay groups, should be – clearly their decision will be greatly influenced not only by the attacks by skinheads but also by the oppressive treatment doled out by those other men and women in uniform.

LGW are currently involved in organising a Gay Action Centre in Bethnal Green every Monday night through to 6 December. For further details send sae to LGW, 5, Caledonian Road, London N1.

London Gay Workshop member

■ Health workers

On 5 November the TUC Health Services Committee called off the transport workers' Day of Action. This had been the next major event planned in the 7 months long health workers' struggle. It may well signal the beginning of the end for the health workers' pay claim. If it does, then the culprits are clear to see – the health workers' union leaders and the TUC.

All along they have held back the health workers' militant struggle. They refused to call an all-out strike and instead used Days of Action, sympathetic stoppages and futile appeals to the conscience of the Government. The result has been to slowly but surely grind down the health workers' militancy. Press speculation currently points to the Government offering between ¼%-1% on top of its original offer. This will be a defeat. As long as workers allow the Spanswicks, Murrys and other pro-imperialist elements to lead the unions the workers will be defeated.

If they are defeated in this struggle it will be a blow to the whole working class. New and vicious NHS cuts are being announced daily. Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, is now to turn away up to 30 patients dying of kidney failure in the next year. As a result many will die. The money saved is a mere £130,000. The country's foremost children's hospital, Great Ormond Street recently said it would be halving its intensive care unit from 40 to 22 beds. This means children dying. The Government has postponed this by giving £100,000, but this is a temporary reprieve. Worst of all, to save £100,000 a year, the Royal Marsden is to close its breast cancer screening unit (the only one of its type in London). It screens 10,000 women each year and thousands of women's lives have been saved. Eight wards are closed already in St Thomas's, South London. And in a pretence of prioritising health care for the elderly and mentally ill, the government is also forcing cuts on health authorities in acute services such as surgery, to divert money towards shoring up the disgraceful services provided for the old and mentally disabled.

These changes are part of the privatisation strategy. Private medicine will expand whilst an impoverished NHS, manned by the most oppressed sections of the working class, will remain to care for those discarded by capitalism – the oppressed and unemployed who are sick, the single parents, the elderly and chronically ill.

The NHS of course was never fully nationalised. Doctors retained the right to use NHS facilities to pursue private practice. The drug industry also exploits the NHS, to an even greater degree. But now the screw is tightening fast. 42 new private hospital ventures have commenced in the last two years. Private medical insurance schemes are now being widely advertised in the media. This week the first private GP health centre opened in London.

The disgraceful action of the union leadership is a betrayal of the low paid and gives direct support to government plans: private medicine for the rich, the poor law for the oppressed.

John Roberts

COMMUNIST TRADITION ON IRELAND PART 17

BRITAIN AND THE IRISH REVOLUTION

The second lesson was the exposure of the real face of the Irish establishment: the Catholic Church, the Dublin government and the SDLP. On the Catholic church:

'From the outset the Catholic hierarchy opposed the hunger strike even though they offered no alternative course of action... their stance has been extremely immoral and misleading... they are intricately immersed in the field of politics and deceit...'

On the Dublin government:

'We believe that the Dublin bloc of Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and Labour are accessories to the legalised murder of ten true and committed Irishmen... They sat idly by and thus encouraged the British to continue with the death policy... If John Bull doesn't actually rule the twenty-six counties physically he still rules in spirit...'

And on the SDLP

'There was only one positively injurious action available to the SDLP which would help save the lives in the H-Blocks and that was to isolate the British administration by withdrawing from the council chambers. This they consistently refused to do... This party should now be recognised for what it is, an amalgamation of middle-class Redmondites (see FRFI 9), devoid of principle, direction and courage. This party is spineless and weak and is very capable of selling-out to unionist intimidators for imperialist perks...'

Although the hunger strike had been defeated and the political prisoners had not achieved the 'five demands', the statement, nevertheless, claimed a 'massive political victory'. This was because the courage and example of the hunger strikers had 'politicised a very substantial section of the Irish nation' and exposed the 'shallow, unprincipled nature of the Irish partitionist bloc'. A claim that one year later was vindicated by the remarkable political gains made by Sinn Féin at the expense of the SDLP in the Assembly elections of October 1982. Sinn Féin fought the election on a 'Break the British connection! Smash Stormont!' platform pledging itself to boycott the proposed Assembly.

DEFEAT OF THE HUNGER STRIKE AND ITS POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES

The denial of political status for Irish political prisoners was central to British imperialism's overall strategy of 'Ulsterisation' adopted soon after the failure of the 'power-sharing' Executive (see FRFI 18). A whole apparatus of emergency legislation, arrest, systematic torture in police cells, forced 'confessions', long remands, Diplock (non-jury) courts, imprisonment and torture in specially built concentration camps, the H-Blocks, had been set up to deny political legitimacy to the national liberation struggle to free Ireland from British rule and 'criminalise' Irish Republicans. So critical was this 'criminalisation' policy for Britain's continued domination over Ireland that the British ruling class was prepared to slowly murder 10 Irish political prisoners and risk undermining the stability of British rule not only in the Six Counties but over Ireland as a whole.

A victory for the political prisoners in the struggle for political status would strike at the heart of British domination over Ireland. To recognise the legitimacy of the prison struggle was to acknowledge the legitimacy of the revolutionary struggle of the IRA to drive British imperialism out of Ireland. Such recognition would also have important consequences in Britain. It would legitimise the use of revolutionary force against British imperialism. It would give strength and example to the developing forces of revolution in Britain. Finally it would not only expose the reactionary and brutal character of British imperialism but also of the British Labour Party and official trade union movement which gave, and still gives, British imperialism consistent support in the oppression of the Irish people. Such a development was not one the British ruling class could accept. It is in this context that the failure of the campaign to win the 'five demands' was a defeat for the political prisoners and a setback for the national liberation struggle.

A year after the hunger strike ended the political prisoners in the H-Block and Armagh prison con-

In their statement announcing the end of the hunger strike in October 1981 the political prisoners in the H-Blocks drew out a number of important political lessons. The first was that the prisoner campaign confirmed the necessity for revolutionary violence in the national liberation struggle.

'Despite the electoral successes, despite the hundreds of thousands at hunger-strikers' funerals, despite massive and unprecedented displays of community support and solidarity, the British government adhered rigidly to the precept that "might is right" and set about hammering home the point that nothing has really changed since the fall of Stormont or from the inception of this state. That is, that nationalist Ireland must always be subjected to the British and loyalist veto.'

From this they concluded that 'nationalist pacifism in the Northern Ireland context' would condemn the nationalist population to subservience, perpetuate partition and undermine the struggle for a just and lasting peace in Ireland.

tinue to face the petty and vindictive harassment of the British prison regime. The promised 'reforms' have, in the main, still not been fully granted. While all prisoners now wear their own clothes, the prison regime has continued to insist that Republicans do any kind of work asked of them by the prison authorities. As a result several hundred Republicans in both the H-Blocks and Armagh prison maintained a 'no-work' protest after the hunger strike ended and were penalised as a result by loss of remission - ten days for every 28 on protest - and loss of other 'privileges' including the denial of educational facilities. The 'no-work' protest was ended in November 1982.

The failure to win the demands of the political prisoners was a setback for the national liberation struggle. It led to the demobilisation of the masses of Irish people who had been drawn into the struggle at every level and who had been politicised during the more than five years of the prisoner campaign. In the Six Counties British imperialism made a concerted effort to try to confuse and demoralise the nationalist population by the use of informers, increased British army raids, wholesale arrests and a barrage of anti-Republican propaganda. In the 26 Counties the cross border collaboration between the Dublin government and British imperialism directed at Republicans has intensified involving coordinated searches etc and the use of direct radio and computer links. The arrest, trial and sentencing in 26 Counties courts of Gerry Tuite and the Republicans who escaped from Crumlin Road gaol in June 1980, shows the far-reaching measures the 26 Counties government is now prepared to take to help British imperialism in its efforts to defeat the IRA.

In spite of all this it is undeniable that the overall result of the prisoner campaign was a growing politicisation of the Irish people. The experience of the hunger strike deepened the hatred of British imper-

ialism and its collaborationist forces both North and South. In the Six Counties this was shown by the dramatic results in the October 1982 Assembly elections, already referred to, when Sinn Féin won 5 out of 12 seats it contested on an anti-imperialist platform. In the 26 Counties the growing disaffection with British imperialism made it impossible for the Dublin government to support British imperialism's reactionary war in the Malvinas/Falkland Islands. And since the proposed assembly did not offer any so-called 'Irish dimension', which the Fianna Fail government might have been able to get its supporters to swallow, the government was forced to oppose the Assembly. However the political developments, which occurred during the hunger strike in the 26 Counties, have still a very long way to go if significant political support for revolutionary Republicanism is to be built. This was reflected in the February 1982 election results in the 26 Counties. It is true that media predictions were proved wrong. The high votes achieved in the June 1981 elections did not completely disappear when the immediate emotional issue of the hunger strike ceased to be present. Although media attention focussed on the budget issue and Sinn Féin, fighting on an abstentionist, anti-imperialist platform, were denied broadcasting time, the election results still showed significant support for the Republican Movement especially in the border areas. Nevertheless no seats were won and the number of first preference votes obtained (17,000) was less than half those achieved during the hunger strike (see FRFI 23).

The defeat of the hunger strike also represented a defeat for the democratic and socialist movement in Britain. The most reactionary Tory government since the Second World War was considerably strengthened by the defeat of the prison struggle in Ireland. It gave that government increased confidence to continue with the attacks on working class

living standards and with the gradual destruction of the 'welfare' state. It meant that the Tory government had no serious opposition in Britain. Its reactionary war in the Malvinas/Falkland Islands. It encouraged the government to proceed with legislation directed against fundamental union rights, action aimed at increasing executive powers (emphasised by the appointment of Kenneth Newman, torturer-in-chief in the Six Counties of Ireland, as head of the Metropolitan Police). The racist legislation directed at the rights of political prisoners and their families. All these developments are taking place with little or no opposition from the British Labour and trade union movement.

The history of the Irish people's struggle for freedom has always, at decisive moments, exposed the forces of collaboration with British imperialism as well as pointing to the new forces of revolution. The prison struggle and the hunger strike were no exception to this. In both Ireland and Britain the enemies of the Irish people were clearly exposed. So were the forces that could be relied on and those that could not.

In Ireland, in the words of the political prisoners, the 'shallow unprincipled nature of the partitionist bloc' was exposed for all to see. Not only do the Dublin governments, Fianna Fail, Fine Gael/Irish Labour Party and the SDLP fall under this category but also the hierarchy of the Catholic Church and the ICTU. Everything that was designed to undermine the hunger strike at critical points (see FRFI 23). In Britain the Labour Party and official trade union movement not unexpectedly gave full backing to the Tory government's murderous policies in Ireland. The ever new 'forces of collaboration' now exposed themselves. The British middle class and socialist left (CPGB, SWP, IMG, WRP, MIM, TOM etc) when faced, in practice, with a choice between siding with the Irish prisoners or with the imperialist Labour Party and its treacherous trade union backers chose the latter. The campaign in support of the hunger strikers was so completely sabotaged that it practically ceased to exist towards the end of 1982 (see FRFI 23).

Finally in both Ireland and Britain the real forces of the Irish revolution began to emerge. In the Six Counties of Ireland behind the prisoners were their relatives, the Republican Movement and the nationalist working class - particularly the young who came out on to the streets and fought the British army/RUC with stones and petrol bombs. In the 26 Counties the Republican Movement and the support of new sections of the Irish working class and, most important of all, new support from the political prisoners, the dispossessed youth of Dublin, came out on the streets after the murder of Bobby Sands (see FRFI 23). In Britain while a number of communists and anti-imperialist groups were fully behind the political prisoners, the significant development was not directly related to the hunger strike. This was the uprisings of black and white youth in the major cities of Britain. These youth, taking their example from the revolutionary nationalist youth in the Six Counties, came to the streets to fight the repressive forces of British imperialism. These will be the forces of revolution in Britain and therefore the true allies of the Irish revolution.

The events of the hunger strike and its outcome confirm once again the main positions of the communist standpoint on the national liberation struggle to free Ireland from British rule. At this stage it is important to summarise the main elements of that standpoint and what it means for building an anti-imperialist movement in Britain today.

BRITISH IMPERIALISM CANNOT PLAY A PROGRESSIVE ROLE IN IRELAND

Imperialism will never voluntarily relinquish its control over an oppressed nation because control enormously strengthens its ability to economically exploit that nation. Any movement against British imperialism to make concessions to the demands of the Irish people has, therefore, been brought about by revolutionary force. On a number of occasions it took an insurrectionary direct threat to the stability of British rule over Ireland to force the British ruling class to move. The only successful and constitutional methods of protest

continued on

BRITAIN AND THE IRISH REVOLUTION

Continued from page 7

ways been ignored. Time and again British imperialism has resorted to outright terror to retain its domination over Ireland.

From the end of the 1870s until the turn of the century, it was the alliance of Michael Davitt's Land League and Parnell's Irish (Home Rule) Party which forced the British government to pass the Home Rule Bill. The Home Rule Bill was a concessionary Land Acts granting limited rights to Irish peasantry and which forced the issue of Home Rule for Ireland into British politics. The Land League resisted the Home Rule Bill and seized land from the landlords in a war which lasted over two decades. Parnell by becoming the President of the Land League used it to reinforce his parliamentary campaign and 'obstruction' tactics in the House of Commons with the implied threat of a resort to force should his efforts to obtain Home Rule fail (see FRFI 8).

The aftermath of the Easter Rising led to revolutionary nationalism being given political expression in a new Sinn Féin movement led by James De Valera. It stood firmly for an Irish Republic. In the December 1918 General Election Sinn Féin achieved a massive electoral victory winning 73 of the 105 seats in Ireland. The vast majority of the Irish people, nearly 70%, had voted for an independent Irish Republic. The British government simply ignored the democratic expression of the will of the Irish people. Sinn Féin set up an Irish Provisional Assembly, Dail Eireann, in January 1919. There were then two 'governments' in Ireland: the British government, Dail Eireann backed by the majority of Irish people; the other that of British imperialism operating from Dublin Castle and using repressive force and institutionalised violence to impose its decrees.

To prevent Dail Eireann establishing a democratic government of the Irish people, British imperialism unleashed a war of terror on Ireland. Dail Eireann was suppressed and all national movements were banned as thousands of British mercenary troops were poured into Ireland in an attempt to drive the Irish people into submission. It was not until the Irish people led by their revolutionary army, the IRA, had fought British imperialism to a standstill that the British government was forced to make concessions to Irish demands for self-determination.

Britain however retained its control over Ireland by signing a deal with a section of the national movement which was prepared to compromise the interests of the Irish people for limited self-government. To do this it partitioned Ireland and created and consolidated a reactionary loyalist police state in the Six Counties of Ireland. A totally reactionary, viciously repressive loyalist statelet became the medium through which British imperialism exerted its political and, therefore, economic domination over Ireland as a whole (see FRFI 10).

In partitioning Ireland and establishing a neo-colonial 26 Counties 'Free State' in the South and a loyalist statelet in the North, British imperialism had the support of the Irish capitalist class. The Irish capitalist class, North and South of the border, had no real interest in fighting for a united Ireland. The partition of Ireland had divided the Irish working class and severely weakened the opposition to capitalist rule in Ireland which had developed during the war of independence. The Irish capitalist class was quite prepared to play a subservient role to the British ruling class as long as it could have a share of the profits arising from imperialist exploitation of Ireland as a whole.

The artificial statelet created by British imperialism in the Six Counties of Ireland was designed to maintain loyalist dominance in that part of Ireland. The loyalist (Protestant) working class in the Six Counties was among British imperialism's most resolute supporters in the partitioning of Ireland. The loyalist workers were, and still are, a privileged section of the working class and the maintenance of their privileges (higher wages, jobs, housing etc) depended on the union with Britain. For this reason they were, and still are, the most implacable enemies of a united Ireland. And for this reason they were, and still are, opposed to any improvement in the conditions of the nationalist (Catholic) working class in the Six Counties. For any improvement in these conditions, any reform of the reactionary loyalist statelet was, and is regarded as a direct threat to their own interests (see FRFI 11).

In the late 1960s the inherently reactionary character of the loyalist statelet was exposed for the world to see when sections of the nationalist minority took to the streets demanding basic democratic rights and were battered, beaten and shot at by the paramilitary forces of the loyalist state. Faced with this brutality and intransigence the nationalist people of Derry staged an insurrection in August 1969 and drove the loyalist forces out of their area.

It was only at this stage that the British Labour government intervened. British troops were sent in to the Six Counties of Ireland to aid the 'civil power'. This action was designed to have one and only one effect - to support loyalist supremacy, the basis of British imperialism's rule in Ireland. The British troops were necessary precisely because the state was unreformable and the nationalist minority could not be bought off. However it took the rise of the Provisional IRA, an effective modern guerrilla army with growing support amongst the nationalist minority to force the British government to abolish Stormont and replace it with direct rule from Westminster nearly two-and-a-half years after the troops were sent in. The British government had no choice after the institutionalised terror of internment without trial (August 1971) and the Bloody Sunday massacres (January 1972) not only had failed to undermine support for the Provisional IRA but had driven hundreds of nationalist youth into its ranks. After Bloody Sunday, nationalist Ireland exploded and the British Embassy in Dublin was burned down. The Six Counties became rapidly ungovernable. The British government suspended Stormont in March 1972. No-one could have any doubts that it was the Provisional IRA which brought it down (see FRFI 13 to 15).

British imperialism had some room for manoeuvre after the suspension of Stormont. The Dublin government, the SDLP and the Catholic Church welcomed direct rule from Westminster and the British government used the opportunity to try to undermine the unity of the nationalist minority and draw support away from the Provisional IRA. The period 1973-5 saw the rise and fall of the power-sharing Executive. The 'carrot' of power-sharing with the Unionists was offered to the Catholic middle-class in return for them giving legitimacy to a new Stormont Assembly and accepting, for the time being, 'the status of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom'. The SDLP took the bait.



Battle of the Bogside

The whole venture came to the inevitable sticky end after loyalist opposition to the Executive, in the form of the Ulster Workers Council strike, brought the Six Counties to a standstill in May 1974. The British Labour government refused to intervene to guarantee essential services. The UWC strike had forcefully reminded it that the price of 'loyalty' to British imperialism was the preservation of loyalist privileges and loyalist supremacy in the Six Counties of Ireland. It was a price that the British Labour government was quite prepared to pay. Loyalist ascendancy, after all, was, and is, the key to British domination over Ireland as a whole (see FRFI 17).

After the fall of the power-sharing Executive the British state resorted to outright repression in a new attempt to defeat the real threat to its interests in Ireland - that from the nationalist masses led by their revolutionary army, the Provisional IRA. It took almost two years to prepare the way for this new 'regime of terror' in the Six Counties of Ireland. The new policy was called 'Ulsterisation'. It involved the 'primacy of the police' in fighting the IRA and the 'criminalisation' of the revolutionary nationalist struggle to free Ireland from British rule. The fundamental feature of this new period of terror was judicial internment - the 'conveyor belt' process of arrest, systematic torture in police cells, forced 'confessions', long remands, Diplock (non-

jury) courts and imprisonment in specially built concentration camps in the H-Blocks. This process demanded the torture and brutalisation of political prisoners in interrogation centres and in the specially built prisons. It was to culminate in the slow and brutal murder of ten Irish political prisoners who had gone on hunger strike to demand their rights to be treated as political prisoners (see FRFI 18 to 23).

In spite of the evidence to the contrary there have been those who, at times, have misread the situation and have seen in the statements of politicians or the editorials of newspapers signs that Britain wants to withdraw from Ireland, and see Ireland united again. One such occasion occurred after the fall of the power-sharing Executive when the political initiatives of the British government were in disarray, and the British were preparing the ground for 'Ulsterisation'. In May 1974, the Liberal MP John Pardoe had called for the withdrawal of British troops by 31 December 1974. Britain's economic crisis was rapidly deepening and many felt that Britain could not afford the expenditure involved in subsidising the Six Counties of Ireland. Evidence of British withdrawal was said to be the substantial pulling out of businesses and closing down of factories. This belief was a factor in the truce negotiated by the Provisional IRA early in 1975. It was later admitted by the IRA that it had misread the signs and that Britain was committed to stabilising the Six Counties 'to assure loyalists' support for the long haul against the Irish Republican Army'. The truce had, in fact, given the British valuable breathing space to reorganise RUC/British army intelligence gathering and resulted in significant damage to the IRA (see FRFI 18).

On 14 August 1978 the *Daily Mirror* ran an editorial under the headline 'Ulster: Bring home the troops'. The British middle class left immediately hailed this as 'a move in the right direction'. It was nothing of the kind. The *Daily Mirror* was simply responding to the growing strength of the anti-imperialist movement in the Six Counties. Massive demonstrations of 10,000 and over in support of the political prisoners regularly took place in 1978. The IRA, far from being defeated, was about to launch a major offensive. The worldwide condemnation of the torture of Irish political prisoners in the interrogation centres of the Six Counties was additional pressure especially after the Amnesty



Falls youth stone British army

meeting of the LCI that 'the partition of Ireland was a crime' and 'there was no future for a policy based on partition'. He apologised(!) for his previous silence on Ireland - sitting silently in Labour Cabinets that introduced and implemented the regime of terror and torture in the Six Counties of Ireland. There were many now who were all too ready to believe that a significant section of the Labour Party could be won over to support for a united Ireland. With Benn fighting for the deputy leadership in 1981 and in the wake of the worldwide condemnation of Britain during the hunger strikes, the LCI trend became more outspoken. But action speaks louder than words.

During the second hunger strike the LCI did next to nothing to force the Labour Party to defend the hunger strikers, apart from calling a tiny march in Mansfield. Throughout the two hunger strikes only one Labour MP, Paddy Duffy, made any kind of protest in Parliament. Benn, although pressed to make a statement on a number of occasions, refused to support the hunger strikers. By the 1982 Labour Party Conference things were very much back to normal. A motion calling on the Labour government to 'withdraw from Ireland, without conditions being imposed by the Unionist minority' and to 'implement a comprehensive Bill of Rights' was placed on the agenda. The proposer of the motion from the LCI trend asked for it to be remitted on the grounds the Labour Party was already committed (sic!) to a united Ireland. This clumsy attempt to cover up for Labour's support for partition was exploded when the Conference overwhelmingly defeated the motion, thereby reaffirming the Labour Party's long tradition of support for the imperialist occupation of Ireland.

British imperialism has no interest in uniting Ireland precisely because a divided Ireland and the existence of the loyalist police state is the key to its domination over Ireland as a whole. After the fall of the power-sharing Executive in May 1974 British imperialism introduced and implemented a regime of terror to try and crush the revolutionary nationalist movement led by the IRA. The British government steadfastly refused to grant Irish political prisoners political status because it cannot acknowledge the political legitimacy of a national liberation movement it has to destroy if it is to maintain its rule over Ireland. Ireland will only be free when British imperialism has been defeated.

NATIONALISM AND SOCIALISM. IRELAND THE KEY TO THE BRITISH REVOLUTION

Over 100 years ago Marx and Engels laid the foundation for a consistent communist standpoint on Ireland. It was they who first established that the question of Irish self-determination stands at the heart of British revolution. At first, Marx and Engels thought Ireland would be liberated as a result of the victory of the working class movement in Britain. Deeper study, however, convinced them that the opposite was true. The British working class would never accomplish anything until it had got rid of Ireland. Ireland is the key to the British revolution.

They reached their new position on the basis of a concrete analysis of the relationship between Britain and Ireland. That relationship significantly changed over a twenty year period. The national liberation movement in Ireland

Report (see FRFI 20 and 21). The *Daily Mirror* was not calling for a united Ireland. It was, as *Republican News* (19 August 1978) pointed out, 'merely calling for a change in the way Britain props up Loyalism; in effect it is calling for an "ulsterisation" of the war'. The *Daily Mirror* recognised that British imperialism had been unable to defeat the IRA and so it was calling for 'a government of Irishmen' to do the job. It wanted the British government to help create a 'stable government' to succeed it and to that end 'the troops should be the last to withdraw'. The *Daily Mirror* has made this call once again - and for the same reasons - following Sinn Féin's victories in the October 1982 Assembly elections.

After the Labour Party had lost the March 1979 election a small section from the 'left' of the Party, very concerned about the fact that Irish workers were refusing to vote Labour (see FRFI 22), began to challenge the pro-Unionist orthodoxy of the imperialist Labour Party. They forced a short debate on Ireland at the Labour Party Conference in 1979. In the Spring of 1980 the Labour Committee on Ireland was set up to build on this development. It was mainly composed of ex-members of the Troops Out Movement and British left groups who had gravitated to the Labour Party. At the 1980 Labour Party Conference, Tony Benn, beginning his campaign for the leadership of the Labour 'left', told a fringe



assumed revolutionary forms with the rise of the Fenian movement — a 'lower orders' movement based on the land. The working class movement in Britain not only lost its revolutionary drive with the defeat of the Chartist movement in 1848 but also fell under the influence of the liberal bourgeoisie for a long period of time.

The British ruling class was divided into two main sections — the old landed aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. Ireland was not only a bastion of power and wealth for the old landed aristocracy but it was a point of unity of both sections of the British ruling class. For the bourgeoisie also benefited from British domination over Ireland. Ireland was not only a source of cheap food and raw materials for British capitalists, but also the impoverished Irish peasantry, driven off the land and forced to emigrate to England, was a source of cheap labour. This forced emigration of Irishmen divided the working class in Britain into two hostile camps. It allowed the ruling class to provide a relatively superior position for British workers as against the Irish and so support and nourish the hostility between these two sections of the working class. This antagonism between British and Irish workers, argued Marx and Engels, 'is the secret of the impotence of the English working class despite its organisation'. For the oppression of Ireland united the ruling class and divided the working class.

The British ruling class was most vulnerable in Ireland where the power of the landed aristocracy was being challenged by a revolutionary national movement based on the land. A defeat for the British ruling class in Ireland would open the way for the British revolution. Provided, of course, that the British working class made common cause with the Irish. The national emancipation of Ireland is the first condition for the victory of the British revolution. And unless the British working class 'made common cause with the Irish', the British working class would never accomplish anything. This is the sense in which Marx and Engels argued that Ireland is the key to the British revolution.

In defending their stand on the Irish question in the First International, Marx and Engels came up against the opportunist leaders of the British Labour movement who at that time were moving closer to Gladstone and the leaders of the liberal bourgeoisie. They were forced to deal with political attacks on the Irish liberation movement which have recurred ever since. These included those of the 'English would-be revolutionaries' who thought Fenianism was 'not altogether wrong' but wanted the Irish movement to use the 'legal means' of meetings and demonstrations... by which the English movement conducted its struggles. Supporters of Marx and Engels argued that the Irish had every right to use force since force was used to deny them their freedom. When Marx, in supporting the call for an amnesty for Irish political prisoners, accused Gladstone 'of deliberately insulting the Irish nation' and attacked the conduct of his government, there were those who thought he went too far. Marx's reply is a political guideline for today: 'It is more important to make a concession to the Irish people than to Gladstone'. Finally Marx and Engels faced defenders of British rule over Ireland who argued that Ireland could not be independent because it would undermine the security of Britain. That the International was to build a demonstration of nearly 100,000 people in support of the demand for an amnesty for Irish political prisoners

was mainly due to the political fight Marx and Engels conducted in support of Irish self-determination in the First International (see FRFI 7).

By the turn of the century capitalism had entered its imperialist phase — a world-wide system of colonial oppression and financial domination of the overwhelming majority of the world by a small number of imperialist countries. Imperialism divides the world into oppressed and oppressor nations. It also divides the working class. A handful of imperialist countries obtain high monopoly profits out of the brutal exploitation of oppressed peoples world-wide. Out of these 'super-profits' imperialism is able to create and sustain a small privileged and influential layer of the working class in the imperialist countries whose conditions of life isolate it from the suffering, poverty and temper of the mass of the working class. This privileged layer has a material interest in the continuation of imperialism for it is the source of its economic and political privileges. Such workers, a labour aristocracy, constitute the social base of opportunism in the working class movement. So critical was this development for the working class movement and so great the damage done to the interests of the working class as a result of the activities of these opportunist layers that Lenin, at the Second Congress of the Communist International (1920), said that opportunism is the principal enemy.

'Opportunism is our principal enemy. Opportunism in the upper ranks of the working class is not proletarian socialism but bourgeois socialism. Practice has shown that the active people in the working class movement who adhere to this opportunist trend are better defenders of the bourgeoisie than the bourgeoisie itself. Without their leadership of the workers, the bourgeoisie could not remain in power.'

In the middle of the nineteenth century Britain already revealed at least two major distinguishing features of imperialism, vast colonies and monopoly profits. Marx and Engels were soon to come into conflict with the opportunist layers of the working class movement in Britain especially in relation to Ireland. And these developments in Britain in fact proved to be the forerunner of developments worldwide. So that by building on the political experience of Marx and Engels on the Irish question, Lenin was able to formulate the tasks of



Irish Citizens Army — revolutionary workers of Dublin

communists in relation to national oppression in the epoch of imperialism. In particular, he was able to make clear the attitude the working class of the imperialist nations should adopt towards national movements.

The mass of the working class in the imperialist countries cannot liberate itself without uniting with the movement of oppressed peoples to destroy imperialism. Only such an alliance will make it possible to wage a united fight against the imperialist powers, the imperialist bourgeoisie and its bought-off agents in the working class. The unity of all forces fighting imperialism can only be achieved on the basis of the internationalist principle 'No nation can be free if it oppresses other nations'. And this is expressed through the demand of the right of nations to self-determination. Far from being counterposed to the socialist revolution, communists insist on this demand precisely in order to promote the socialist revolution. For unless imperialism is fatally weakened and opportunism defeated the socialist revolution cannot succeed (see FRFI 9).

This standpoint demands that the working class in the imperialist nation 'make common cause' with the oppressed peoples fighting imperialism. And, as Lenin argued, socialists could not, without ceasing to be socialists, reject such a struggle right down to an uprising or war. For the working class

to side with its own ruling class, or not actively oppose it, in the imperialist domination of the oppressed people necessarily means to strengthen the domination of opportunist forces over itself. Further, it undermines the unity of the working class in the oppressed and oppressor nations and hence the possibility of defeating imperialism and beginning the socialist revolution.

Since the rise of the Fenian movement in the 1860s up to today, the most critical revolutionary challenge to British imperialism has come from Ireland. The dominance of opportunist forces in the British working class movement however has not only held back the working class struggle in Britain but has also limited support for the Irish revolution. The failure of the working class movement in Britain to rid itself of its opportunist leadership and 'make common cause' with the Irish revolution has meant a severe set-back for the socialist revolution in both Ireland and Britain. Ireland is undoubtedly still the key to the British revolution.

It was the alliance of the leaders of the British working class with the Liberals which enabled the land question in Ireland to be resolved from above at the expense of the mass of the Irish peasantry, so avoiding the revolutionary consequences of the land war (see FRFI 8). There were however efforts by revolutionary socialists and others to carry out agitational work on the Irish question and a massive demonstration of 100-150,000 took place in April 1887 against the recently passed Irish Coercion Bill — even Gladstone, out of office, supported the demonstration. Eleanor Marx and Edward Aveling played a leading role in this agitational work so carrying on the tradition of Marx and Engels. However, the opportunist forces in the British labour movement proved to be too strong. Engels said at the time in an interview published in 1888

'The masses are for the Irish. The organisations and the labour aristocracy in general, follow Gladstone and the liberal bourgeois and do not go further than these.'

When the revolutionary workers of Dublin led by the ITGWU challenged Irish capitalism and its British imperialist backers during the Dublin strike and lock-out of 1913/14 the leadership of the British Labour and trade union movement did everything it could to undermine real solidarity action from British workers. The ITGWU was a revolutionary

the Irish capitalist class, accepted partition. The revolutionary wing of the national movement supported by Irish Labour was against partition. Once again the British Labour movement was faced with a choice. And it chose to support partition and stand with the Irish bourgeoisie and British imperialism against the Irish working class. Having betrayed the revolutionary unionism of Larkin and Connolly during the Dublin lock-out, the British Labour movement went on to oppose the Easter Rising 1916 and applauded the judicial murder of its leaders, including the revolutionary socialist James Connolly. Arthur Henderson, the Labour MP, was in the War Cabinet which brutally crushed the Easter Rising and ordered Connolly's execution (see FRFI 9 and 10).

During the imperialist war the Irish Party organised recruiting meetings up and down the country in defence of Britain and its Empire. But British imperialism was prevented from introducing conscription into Ireland. For Irish Labour and the revolutionary wing of the national movement united in a successful mass campaign against the attempt of Lloyd George to introduce conscription into Ireland in 1918. Ireland saw the only general strike against the imperialist war in any Western European country (see FRFI 10).

After the Irish people had overwhelmingly voted for an Irish Republic, had set up Dail Eireann and been forced to wage a revolutionary war to win its fundamental right to self-determination, the British Labour and trade union movement still refused to give it support. Trade union leaders in Britain did everything they could to prevent workers in Britain taking strike action in support of the Irish war, eg refusing to load munitions bound for Ireland. When the British government signed the Treaty with a section of the national movement prepared to sell out the interests of the Irish masses, and partitioned Ireland, it received the wholehearted support of the British Labour movement. Only the small British Communist Party took a principled stand opposing the Treaty and supporting the revolutionary national wing of the IRA in the civil war (see FRFI 10 and 11).

At every stage in this period the British Labour movement refused to 'make common cause' with the Irish. As a result the British working class found itself still dominated by the same opportunist leaders who betrayed its struggles before and after the imperialist war and who were to betray its struggles right up to the defeat of the General Strike in 1926. Marx and Engels were right. By refusing to 'make common cause' with the Irish the British working class accomplished nothing.

From the ending of the Irish civil war (1923) until the late 1960s the social and political conditions did not exist to unite a mass movement behind a military and political campaign to destroy the loyalist statelet and unite Ireland (see FRFI 12). In the late 1960s, however, what began as a struggle of the nationalist minority in the occupied Six Counties of Ireland for basic democratic rights, was soon turned into a revolutionary war directed at British imperialism. In that period it was conclusively demonstrated in practice that the loyalist statelet was unreformable. Basic democratic rights for the nationalist population could only be achieved by ending partition and driving British imperialism out of Ireland. The 1970s saw the rise of the Provisional IRA as a revolutionary army with mass support amongst the nationalist minority in the Six Counties of Ireland. Again the direct revolutionary challenge to British imperialism was coming from Ireland.

Throughout the more than 13 years' duration of this latest phase of the Irish national liberation struggle, the British Labour Party backed by the official trade union movement has played a direct role in oppressing and terrorising the nationalist minority in the Six Counties of Ireland. In 1969 the British Labour government sent troops into the Six Counties of Ireland to support loyalist supremacy on the basis of British imperialism's rule in Ireland. In 1974 a Labour government introduced the racist anti-Irish Prevention of Terrorism Act designed to provide a legal cover for the systematic harassment of the Irish community in Britain in general, and for all, in particular, who were prepared to fight for a United Ireland. Finally, nothing has exposed the moral and political bankruptcy of the British Labour and trade union movement more sharply than its collaboration with the regime of terror and torture administered by the British Labour government in the Six Counties of Ireland from 1976-1979 (see FRFI 19 to 21). It is of little surprise that the British Labour movement not only remained

continued overle

BRITAIN AND THE IRISH REVOLUTION

continued from page 9

passive and silent but actually collaborated with the British government in the slow and brutal murder of 10 Irish political prisoners on hunger strike during 1981. Far from 'making common cause' with the Irish people in their struggle for freedom, the British Labour Party and official trade union movement has become the zealous servant of their oppressor, British imperialism.

A working class movement from an oppressor nation which refuses to support an oppressed people fighting for the democratic right to self-determination will not be able to defend itself. It is, therefore, not surprising, that faced with the most reactionary Tory government since the war, faced with massive unemployment and growing attacks on living standards the British Labour and official trade union movement has done next to nothing to defend the working class. By refusing to 'make common cause' with the Irish the British working class has strengthened the hold of opportunist forces over itself. The struggle for socialism in Britain has been dramatically set back.

Imperialism will only be destroyed and opportunism defeated by the alliance of the British working class with the revolutionary national movement in Ireland. There can be little doubt today that, once again, the revolutionary challenge to British imperialism comes from Ireland. The ruling class understands this very well. As T E Utey of the *Daily Telegraph* said in 1976

'... British security is hardly compatible with the existence of a Cuba a few miles from her Western shores.'

And John Biggs Davidson, Tory MP, backs him up

'... if we lose in Belfast, we may have to fight in Brixton and Birmingham.' (see FRFI 18)

Ireland is the key to the British revolution.

BRITISH MIDDLE-CLASS SOCIALISM AND THE IRISH REVOLUTION

The British Labour Party gives organised political expression to the interests of the upper ranks of the working class—the Labour aristocracy. Its standpoint is bourgeois socialism. The Labour Party has always been a zealous defender of British imperialism's interests in Ireland and, when in power, has directed the oppression of the Irish people. No significant section of the Labour Party has or could

When confronted with an IRA bombing campaign in Britain in the late 1930s the Communist Party of Great Britain started to move away from its earlier principled, communist position on the Irish national liberation struggle. While supporting the 'just aims' of the IRA, the CPGB attacked its 'methods of struggle' particularly the armed struggle and the bombing campaigns in Britain (see FRFI 12). This position was transitional to its openly reactionary standpoint today. As soon as the latest phase of the war began, the CPGB entered the bourgeois socialist camp.

In the 1968 edition of its programme the *British Road to Socialism* the CPGB stated clearly and unequivocally

'The enforced partition of Ireland should be ended and British troops withdrawn from Northern Ireland, leaving the Irish people free to realise their united republic'.

On the very day the British troops were sent into Derry on 14 August 1969 the Political Committee of the CPGB issued a statement which said

'Any basic constitutional changes are questions of a longer-term nature which can only be settled by consulting with the people of Ireland. The immediate question is that of civil rights and democratic rights.' (Our emphasis)

For the CPGB 1969 was the year when the fundamental democratic right to self-determination suddenly became a 'basic constitutional change' of a 'longer-term nature'. British imperialism was called upon to reform the loyalist state—to introduce a programme of democratic rights (a Bill of Rights), to end repression and discrimination and give financial and economic aid to provide jobs, housing and industrial development in Northern Ireland. Only after this programme had been carried out would it be possible to 'overcome sectarian divisions' and withdraw British troops from Ireland allowing the Irish people to rule the whole of their country—a process to be brought about, it seems, by consent.

This is 'socialist colonial policy' with a vengeance—the plea for a 'colonial policy, which under a socialist regime [read 'left' Labour government], may have a civilising effect' (see FRFI 8). But who is to guarantee this 'civilising effect'. It appears that this is to be left in the hands of the British army guided by the British Labour movement

'And when the violence does come, the British Labour movement must be prepared to use every ounce of its strength to force the army command to use its military power in defence of democracy' (*Morning Star* 24 October 1974)

British imperialism which created and sustained a sectarian loyalist police state in the Six Counties of Ireland to preserve British rule in Ireland as a whole was now to destroy it. The guarantor for this was to

come under the RUC hammer in an unprecedented way during the Summer.

The new chief constable of the RUC, Kenneth Newman with his background in the English police not the RUC has played a key part in moderating the tacit toleration of known Unionist gunmen by the RUC special branch.' (*Morning Star* 23 September 1977)

At the time Kenneth Newman was in the process of organising and administering the systematic torture of political prisoners during interrogation in police cells (see FRFI 20). For the CPGB a progressive side to British imperialism has to be found come what may. It is little wonder that the CPGB has never missed an opportunity to attack the national liberation struggle led by the Provisional IRA, arguing that its 'campaign of violence' gives a cover for British repression.

In February 1976 the loyalist dominated Northern Ireland Committee of the ICTU launched the 'Better Life for All Campaign'. One of its 'democratic' demands was the right 'to advocate political change by peaceful means', a clear attack on the national liberation struggle led by the Provisional IRA. The CPGB has used this campaign ever since in an attempt to block all support in the British trade union movement for the national liberation struggle in Ireland. The 'Better Life for All Campaign', needless to say, has had no support in Britain or Ireland. Nevertheless it has been used to cement an alliance of the official British trade union movement with the loyalist working class, under the guise of trade union unity. The support the CPGB has given to that alliance has significantly strengthened the hold of opportunist forces in the British Labour movement.

The other major organisations of the British left are a variety of Trotskyist groups which, in common with Trotsky on the Irish revolution (see FRFI 10), have a totally abstract and idealist understanding of the national question. As the pressure resulting from the very real war of national liberation in Ireland has built up most of these groups have been driven towards the bourgeois socialist camp.

The Militant Tendency in the imperialist Labour Party joined the bourgeois socialist camp as soon as the troops were sent in on 14 August 1969. It not only supported the troops being sent in (see FRFI 15) but regards those who call for withdrawal of British troops from Ireland 'as attorneys of the Provos' (*Bulletin* Nov/Dec 1979). It still believes that British imperialism wants to wash its hands of Ireland completely, on the grounds that the border has 'outlived its usefulness' for the British capitalist class. Thinking that you can overcome the partition of Ireland and the division of the Irish working class by ignoring it, Militant calls for an all-Ireland Labour Party and a trade union defence force to defend all working class areas, Catholic and Protestant, from sectarian attacks... All this idealist drive is designed to cover up its very real support for British imperialism in Ireland.

Most of the other Trotskyist groups claim to be opposed to British imperialism's presence in Ireland. All of them however consistently attack the armed struggle of the IRA—terrified that the revolutionary violence of the oppressed might create problems for their own so 'revolutionary' political work. Recently *Socialist Worker* has argued that the IRA methods are opposed to those of the socialist movement:

'While the IRA have bombed factories in Northern Ireland as part of their struggle, as part of ours we campaign for workers to take over those factories—a completely different approach.' (Chris Harman 14 August 1982)

In this the SWP only repeats the arguments of the 'English would-be liberators' of Ireland who limited their support for the Irish movement on the grounds that the Irish did not use the same methods as English workers. Over 100 years ago such arguments were adequately dealt with by supporters of Marx and Engels (see above).

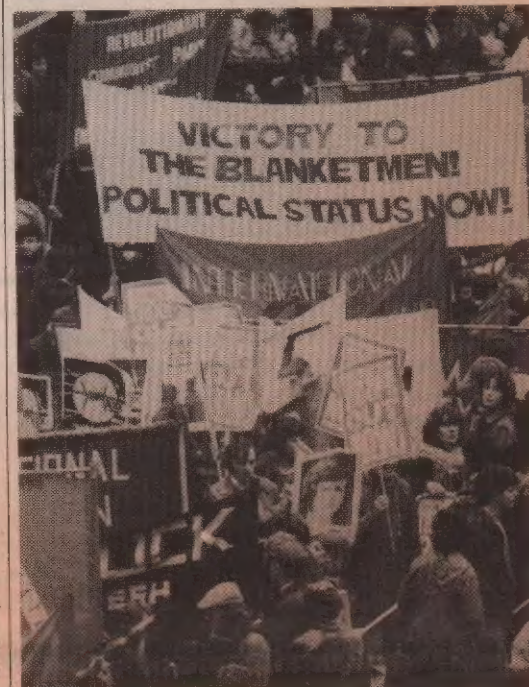
In July 1982 the SWP and WRP went so far as to argue that the IRA bombing campaign in Britain against military personnel in Central London distracted British workers from fighting back against Thatcher's reactionary policies. 'The front pages were cleared of unemployment figures...' whined *Newsline* (21 July 1982). And *Socialist Worker* had the nerve to say

'On the very day when the depths of the government's callousness, hypocrisy and incompetence were laid bare, Thatcher was presented with the perfect distraction' (24 July 1982).

Socialist Worker conveniently forgets that the

Tory government's callousness, like the Labour government's before it, has been clear for a long time—in Ireland. Had not Thatcher's government, so recently, cruelly and brutally murdered ten hunger strikers? What more evidence should British workers want? No-one can seriously believe that IRA bombs have distracted British workers from fighting back. The fact is that so far there has simply been no fightback. And the reason is that the British Labour movement, with leaders and organisations long corrupted through their support for British imperialist oppression of the Irish people, has proved incapable of fighting back. Far from cringing before backward and reactionary attitudes in the British Labour movement, real socialists and communists would be arguing for British workers to 'make common cause' with the Irish liberation movement in fighting their common enemy: British imperialism.

Like the CPGB, many of the Trotskyist organisations believe that British imperialism can play a progressive role in Ireland. So the SWP, for a period of time, allowed the pressure of events to force it into the bourgeois socialist camp when it supported British troops going into Ireland in August 1969 (see FRFI 15). The SWP has also consistently argued, in spite of all evidence and arguments to the contrary, that British imperialism has



RCG/FRFI support blanketmen

an economic interest in uniting Ireland. Chris Harman, a leading SWP 'theoretician', even went so far as to see progressive developments in the Thatcher/Haughey December 1980 talks, just before the end of the first hunger strike (see FRFI 23):

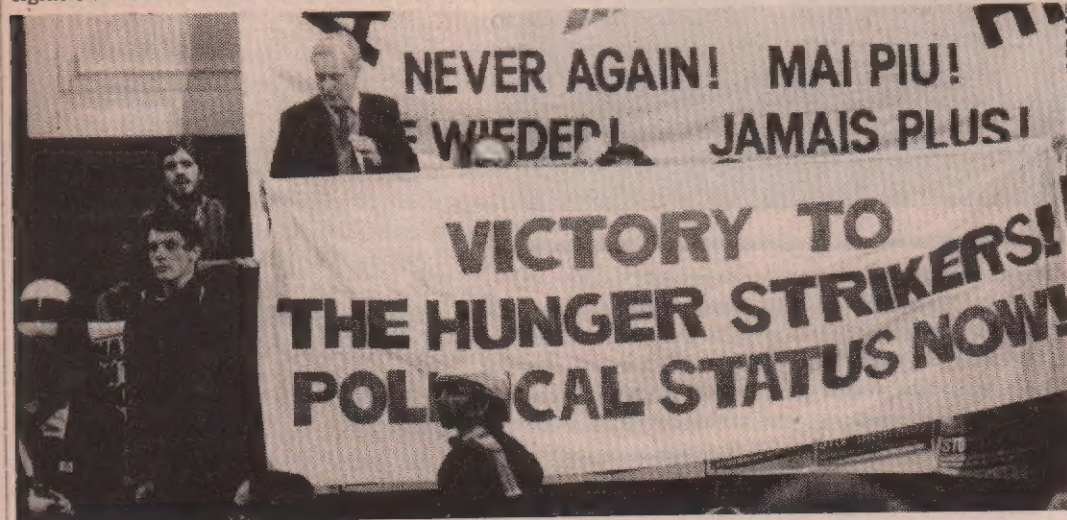
'Today the much greater depth of the economic crisis means that at least a section of the ruling class is thinking that it can no longer afford either the war or the aid. It is looking to cutting costs anywhere it can, and would be as glad to rid itself of "the dreary steeples of Fermanagh and Tyrone" as the hospitals of South London. Hence the indications that the Tory government is looking once again at possible ways of disengaging itself' (*Socialist Review* Jan/Feb 1981)

What would this political babe-in-arms say now after the Malvinas/Falklands war and, of course, the collapse of the Thatcher/Haughey talks. The British middle-class left fundamentally will never be prepared to accept that British imperialism will only leave Ireland when driven out by the revolutionary force of the Irish masses.

This is further demonstrated by the attitude of the British left to the loyalist working class. *Socialist Worker*, in yet another article by Chris Harman on 'The rights and wrongs of the IRA' argues that support for the Provos to 'beat the British state' cannot be won unless the Provos move

'... from talking merely of national unity and independence to fighting about issues that affect all workers, North or South, Catholic or Protestant, Irish or British—issues of unemployment, working conditions, welfare services.' (14 August 1982)

That is, as Harman put it in the article cited earlier, they have to speak to the 'best Protestant workers' in a language they can understand. This doctrine which James Connolly described as 'almost screamingly funny in its absurdity' (see FRFI 9) simply ignores the existence of national oppression and the reality of British imperialism's presence in Ireland. The loyalist working class is hand in glove



Benn refuses to speak out in support of hunger strikers

take up a consistent fight against British imperialism's policies in Ireland without breaking with the Labour Party. This has however not stopped all the major organisations of the British middle-class socialist left active on the Irish question from trying to find some section of the imperialist Labour Party prepared to take a 'progressive' standpoint on Ireland.

Politically the organisations of the British left have vacillated between the communist and bourgeois socialist standpoint on Ireland so reflecting their class position in society (see FRFI 22). As the crisis in Ireland has deepened, and especially in periods when the revolutionary challenge to British imperialism has intensified, more and more of these organisations, in the absence of a strong anti-imperialist current, have adopted a bourgeois socialist standpoint.

be a British Labour movement which had consistently betrayed the Irish people's struggle for freedom over the last hundred years. The CPGB has used this middle-class idealist fantasy to justify its reactionary standpoint over the last 13 years.

There are none so blind as those who will not see. In 1977 the activities of loyalist paramilitary organisations had declined, as is always the case in a period of growing repression by the British army and RUC. There had also been action taken by the RUC and British army to end the loyalist strike in May 1977 (see FRFI 21). The CPGB put this all down to the English moderation of the new Chief Constable Kenneth Newman.

'Politically isolated by their crushing defeat at the hands of the organised trade union movement, the Unionist paramilitary groups have

with British imperialism because it guarantees loyalist workers their privileged position in relation to nationalist workers. For the same reason the loyalist working class is an implacable enemy of Republicanism and a united Ireland. Unless British imperialism is driven out of Ireland the unity of Irish workers cannot be achieved.

The belief that the Irish working class can be united before British imperialism is defeated is designed to avoid facing this reality. The Communist Party wants to unite the Irish working class from above by British imperialism reforming the loyalist statelet. The Militant grouping wants the agents of British imperialism, the Labour Party and the official trade union movement to do it from above by creating an all-Ireland Labour Party and a non-sectarian trade union defence force. And the SWP wants to do it from below by Republicans appealing to loyalist workers on economic issues. And they all do this to cover up for their own refusal to 'make common cause' with the Irish national liberation struggle led by the IRA against the common enemy British imperialism.

The British left have rejected out of hand the Marxist standpoint on Ireland. Harman in the *Socialist Review* article cited above actually states clearly that if Marx's position means 'that the Irish struggle is the detonator that will explode British society, it is probably wrong'. For him Marx's position 'was connected to the struggle to overcome racist division within the British working class, with aroused Irish workers playing a vanguard role in the struggle of the class as a whole'. But this ignores the most significant component of the Marxist position still relevant today: that a revolutionary challenge to the British ruling class was taking place in Ireland, its weakest point. If British workers 'made common cause' with the Irish, the national liberation struggle in Ireland would be the 'detonator' which set off the British revolution – a revolution in which Irish and British workers would be united. If they refused, they would strengthen ruling class domination over themselves.

The SWP quite clearly holds to the position Marx and Engels had before 'deeper study' had forced them to reverse their position on Ireland, before Britain had revealed two major distinguishing features of imperialism (see above). For the SWP, and the rest of the Trotskyist left in Britain, a deeply ingrained imperialist 'superiority' allows them to believe that it will be the victory of the British working class which will make Ireland and other oppressed nations free. Nothing expresses this more clearly than the patently chauvinist statement made by the leader of the SWP, Tony Cliff in 1975 on the South African revolution:

'After the revolution in Britain, the BBC (perhaps renamed the Workers' Revolutionary Broadcasting Station) could carry out a very simple appeal to workers around the world: Take into your own hands former British capital. Black workers of South Africa! With your sweat and blood you created the gold mines. They are yours! Workers throughout the world – take!' (*The Crisis, Social Contract or Socialism* pp191-2)

The South African and Irish working class have, in reality, nothing they can learn from British workers. On the contrary it is British workers who have much to learn from them. The focal point of the world revolution shifted long ago from the working class in the imperialist nations. The British middle-class socialist left have obviously still to come to terms with this.

The main vehicle for the British left's 'solidarity' work on the Irish question, if it has been carried out at all, has been the Troops Out Movement (TOM). From the very beginning TOM's activities have been directed to building an alliance with the left of the imperialist Labour Party, thus holding to the position that British imperialism can be made to play a progressive role in Ireland. For this reason TOM has never carried out or supported any political campaign in solidarity with the national liberation struggle led by the IRA. Nor has TOM called for the defeat of British imperialism in Ireland. In this it merely reflects the class position of the British left groups.

To sustain its alliance with a section of the imperialist Labour Party, TOM soon dropped the anti-imperialist demand Troops Out Now! as a campaigning slogan. It refused to give political support to the 1978 anti-imperialist prisoner campaign led by the PAC and supported by Sinn Féin and the RCG, preferring to conduct an innocuous and ineffective International Tribunal on Britain's Presence in Ireland instead. By the end of the

second hunger strike TOM was barely active. Faced with the fact that the so-called 'left' of the Labour Party simply refused to take any effective action on the 'five demands', TOM in alliance with the SWP/IMG took all the pressure off them by not campaigning at all (see FRFI 22 and 23). The hunger strike showed that the whole strategy of TOM had completely failed – the imperialist Labour Party could not be moved.

Today a document is circulating in TOM from four leading members. This document draws out the inevitable logic of TOM's position. In arguing for a 'British withdrawal movement' it states

'The question of withdrawal [of British troops] now is not a principle but a diversion ...

... a supposedly principled pro-IRA movement is unnecessarily too advanced in its stance and impractical to build ...

... campaigns for example on IRA prisoners in English jails are about the last topic any British withdrawal movement should concern itself with, as their plight is the most difficult and fruitless aspect to take up of the whole Irish question ...'

There you have it. Something that has always been implicit has now been made explicit. Any anti-imperialists still remaining in TOM will be forced to



Revolutionary youth take to the streets in Brixton

PRESS ASSOCIATION

make a choice. Are you for the victory of the Irish liberation movement against British imperialism or are you more concerned to build an alliance with the imperialist Labour Party. Which side are you on?

DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS IN BRITAIN AND THE IRISH REVOLUTION

Precisely because the Irish question is at the heart of the British revolution those campaigning in Britain in solidarity with the Irish national liberation struggle have necessarily had to confront the forces of repression of the British imperialist state. After Bloody Sunday 1972 the largest demonstration on Ireland for many years, 20,000 strong, was batoned off the streets by the British police and the organisers were arrested (see FRFI 15). The Prevention of Terrorism Act 1974 has been used as a weapon to deter people, especially the Irish community in Britain, from politically campaigning in support of the Irish revolution. Political organisations have been consistently harassed and often prevented from selling their newspapers and conducting street meetings on the question of Ireland.

Members and supporters of the RCG, supporters of FRFI and supporters of Hands Off Ireland, for example, have faced consistent police harassment over the last three years. The police harassment began, significantly, with the campaign launched against the Labour Party during the last General Election in May 1979 (see FRFI 22). To date there have been, in England, Scotland and Wales, some 60 arrests involving 85 charges. The vast majority of these arrests and charges were directly related to work on Ireland. Three supporters have spent time in custody under the PTA – two were actually charged under the PTA. These figures cover a period of three years and concern the work of a small group of people. Every such police attack has been resisted not only to protect the people involved

but also to protect the basic democratic rights which are essential to the working class as a whole. Organised legal and political resistance has meant that in the cases which have been through the courts 33 acquittals have been achieved against 26 convictions. The continuing harassment is made clear by the fact that at the present time there are 24 cases/appeals still outstanding. This police harassment has needless to say cost thousands of pounds in fines and legal costs.

The most serious attacks have occurred either where communists have begun to form links with revolutionary black youth (Leeds Precinct case 1982) or where communists have begun to campaign in alliance with revolutionary nationalist workers (Glasgow 2 case 1980). The Glasgow 2 case is the most serious instance out of the 21 arrests which have taken place in Scotland. The two were arrested selling FRFI – an issue containing an interview with an IRA Volunteer – outside Celtic football ground in Glasgow on 9 August 1979. They were charged under the PTA and remanded in prison for one week. A massive campaign drawing in support from many MPs, councillors and political organisations forced the Scottish authorities to drop the PTA charges, although the Glasgow 2 were eventually convicted on a fraudulent charge of breach of the peace. In Scotland too there were three bans on

employment stands at over 20% in the Six Counties far higher than any area in Britain. And even in non-sectarian areas of this police state the nationalist areas suffer unemployment rates over 50%. In some nationalist areas nearly all the young people have no job and no chance of getting one. The nationalist youth are the implacable enemies of British imperialism. They demonstrate their revolutionary spirit during the hunger strike when night after night they took to the streets and fought the British army with stones and petrol bombs. They are the forces of revolution. They follow the revolutionary lead of the IRA.

The 26 Counties neo-colonial state is facing political and economic crisis of unprecedented proportions. Having mortgaged itself to imperialism it can only pay back its debts by savagely attacking the Irish working class. One third of all industrial jobs are in imperialist firms attracted by massive profits subsidised out of heavy taxes on the working class. American imperialism boasts a profit rate of 33.7% in Ireland, its highest rate of return in the world, and twice the European average. The neo-colonial state has a staggering foreign debt of IR£4bn, more than one-third of the Irish GNP and twice as high per head of population as Poland's. With the official unemployment rate at 12.5% – the real figure is certainly much higher – inflation still in the region of 17%, and, according to official statistics, one quarter of the Irish population living in poverty, it is little wonder that the 26 Counties of Ireland staggers from one political crisis to another.

While unemployment is rising everywhere it is chronic amongst the youth. During the hunger strike sections of the youth in Dublin, enraged by the inactivity of the 26 Counties government after the murder of Bobby Sands by British imperialism, took to the streets and fought the Gardaí, in the manner of their comrades in the Six Counties, with stones and petrol bombs (see FRFI 23). With the hunger strike and the economic crisis increasingly exposing the bankruptcy of the neo-colonialist regime, its governments and its agents in the Irish working class, such as the ICTU, the opportunist leadership now exists for winning the masses of Irish workers led by the youth to the anti-imperialist struggle.

It is no coincidence that as the revolutionary youth of Derry, Belfast and Dublin fought pitched battles on the streets against the British imperialist forces and their loyalist and 'Free State' puppets, so the unemployed youth – black and white – rose up throughout Britain against the British imperialist state.

British imperialism, itself in deep crisis, has nothing but oppression and poverty to offer these youths. They have no illusions in the institutions of British imperialist democracy. They, like the Irish, have been forced to take the revolutionary and insurrectionary road. This reality was recognised by the ruling class media when the first Uprising – in St Pauls, Bristol – took place

'It was like a scene from Belfast without bombs.' (*Daily Mail* 3 April 1980)

'These are things that we have regarded with horror when they happen in Ulster. We never dreamed that in the England of 1980 we could have "no-go" areas like those of Londonderry. It must never, never happen again.' (*Sun* 5 April 1980)

The Uprisings conclusively demonstrated that forces exist in Britain which are capable of the dedication and sacrifice that is necessary in the struggle against British imperialism here at home. These are forces which will risk the arrest, imprisonment and immense hardship which comes through participation in this fight. These are forces which will, by following the courageous lead set by Irish revolutionaries, give a lead to the mass of the British working class.

Only by following the example of these revolutionary forces and 'making common cause' with the revolutionary national struggle to free Ireland from British rule, can the British working class undermine and destroy the common enemy; British imperialism. Ireland is the key to the British revolution. Only by taking this stand will the British working class make a reality of the revolutionary slogan of the Communist International:

'Workers of all countries and oppressed peoples unite! Victory to the Irish People!'

David Reed
November 1982
Concluded

marches during the hunger strike as well as arrests. This bare summary of police harassment against a very small number of communists and anti-imperialists over the last three years shows the lengths to which the British state will go to prevent a strong anti-imperialist movement from growing. It shows that those in Britain determined to build a real Irish solidarity movement will play a central role in the defence of democratic rights for all workers in Britain.

FORCES OF REVOLUTION

It has been demonstrated time and again over the last 13 years that the national liberation struggle to free Ireland from British rule cannot be won if confined to the Six Counties alone. The neo-colonial state in the 26 Counties is a fundamental barrier to a united Ireland and will have to be destroyed if British imperialism is to be driven out of Ireland. Finally the important obstacle of British working class support for British imperialism must be overcome if the Irish revolution is to open the way for the struggle for socialism in Ireland and Britain.

The last 13 years of the Irish war of national liberation has also exposed the forces of collaboration with British imperialism and pointed to the forces of revolution. This is true in the Six Counties and 26 Counties, and in Britain as well as Ireland. Which are the forces of revolution?

British imperialism faces its most immediate political threat from the nationalist working class in the Six Counties led by its armed vanguard the IRA. For 13 years the IRA has kept at bay the British army, the most highly trained counter-insurgency force in the world. British imperialism can only retain its political domination of the Six Counties of Ireland by terror. It can offer no future to the nationalist working class. Poverty, unemployment and some of the worst housing in Europe is the legacy of British rule in Ireland. Under Britain's control, unem-

EL SALVADOR revolutionary blows

In a speech during the second week of October, El Salvador's Defence Minister General Garcia declared that the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) was in its 'death throes'. Two months of low level FMLN military activity had badly damaged Garcia's judgement. A few days after his speech the FMLN struck with a vengeance in the provinces of Chalatenango and Morazan where they have overrun and are occupying more than 7 towns and villages. Elsewhere guerilla actions are rapidly spreading throughout the country.

The FMLN offensive, which began on 12 October, coincided with the third anniversary of the 15 October 1979 coup that brought the fascist army to power and led to the slaughter of over 38,000 Salvadoran workers, peasants, students and progressive intellectuals and priests. The revolutionary assault in Chalatenango and Morazan demonstrated a new level of co-ordination and efficiency. Using captured heavy weaponry they overran with ease villages and towns in the provinces. A military observer commented in one case:

'They just rolled over the garrison. The guerillas have eaten up the best part of two companies.'

The government has nearly 10,000 US trained troops deployed against the rev-



El Salvadorean peasant family

olutionaries, but as on many previous occasions, they are being forced ignominiously to retreat. Government casualties include over 200 dead, 116 soldiers captured as well as the loss of valuable arms and ammunition to the

FMLN including numerous M-165 machine guns. As we go to press the FMLN offensive is pressing on with full force. Most of the north and northeast of El Salvador is now under revolutionary control and the FMLN is poised to overrun Suchitana, the capital of Cuscatlan province.

Contrary to imperialist hopes, the two months of low level military activity by the FMLN did not indicate any weakening of the workers and peasants armed organisations. The FMLN have used this period both to consolidate their military organisation and position and to consolidate the structures of workers' and peasants' power they have introduced in liberated zones, particularly in Chalatenango and Morazan. Here peoples' committees have taken over the control of production, food distribution, health, education, propaganda, information and popular militias. A Mexican journalist visiting a liberated zone in Chalatenango wrote:

'In all my travels before getting to the zones I saw nothing but misery, hunger, pain and pent-up rage. When one enters a zone it's like crossing a border into another country: you see

people laughing, kids playing... old men telling stories of past heroes... Here people look you in the eyes and call you "companero".'

With the collapse of repeated army attacks on liberated zones in Chalatenango and Morazan and with the FMLN's military capabilities intact, US imperialism realises the impossibility of defeating the popular revolution by brutality and force alone. It is therefore, along with sectors of the fascist regime, engaged in manoeuvres to try to split and weaken the revolutionary camp. They are putting out 'feelers' for political contacts with the FDR - the political organisation of the liberation movement. These are an attempt to entice out of the revolutionary camp a section of El Salvador's middle classes who have hitherto united with the workers and peasants in their struggle against imperialism. The carrot being offered is presidential elections in 1984. US Ambassador Deane Hinton has openly proclaimed his expectations of FDR participation in these elections and has spoken of the desirability of a split between the political and military wings of the liberation movement. The effectiveness of such tactics,

however, will be limited in proportion to the increase in popular power and FMLN military power. They are in addition being sabotaged by competing factions in El Salvador's ruling regime who in late October organised the kidnapping of 14 FDR leaders in San Salvador, 8 of whom are to stand trial for 'terrorism'. Meanwhile, the fascist regime and US imperialism have once again rejected an FMLN-FDR proposal for negotiations without any conditions. The imperialists are insisting that any negotiations must be preceded by the FMLN-FDR laying down their arms and accepting the political institutions (i.e. the fascist regime!) currently functioning in El Salvador. The revolutionaries naturally reject such a suicidal course of action.

The war in El Salvador shows the contrast between revolutionary civilisation and imperialist barbarism. The government's US trained and equipped Atlacil and Belloso brigades have now carried out 4 major massacres of unarmed civilians since their return from training in 'democratic' USA in March 1982. In contrast, FMLN forces are opening PoW camps for captured enemy soldiers. In September, the FMLN released a number of captured PoWs - some refused to leave, preferring to remain behind and fight with the revolution. British communists and democrats stand with the forces of revolutionary civilisation, with the FMLN and the workers and peasants of El Salvador.

Victory to the FMLN

Eddie Abrahams

BANKING CRISIS LOOMS

continued from page 1

the collapse of the ability to pay. While production in the oppressed nations grew at 6% a year in the 1970s, it fell to 3% in 1980 and a mere 0.6% in 1981. Yet last year, their debts grew by 17%. In Latin America, the debt of Brazil, Argentina and Chile grew by 16%, 25% and 43% respectively, while overall production in all three countries actually declined. It is obviously only a matter of time before the crisis strikes.

International Monetary Fund missions have been scurrying all over Latin America to shore up the crumbling international finance system - to Mexico, Argentina, Chile and most recently Ecuador, where youth and students rioted in protest at austerity measures taken by the government.

The banks are utterly parasitic and dependent on this exploitation; their only hope of getting their money back is to intensify it, attacking the masses. The imperialists are well aware of this and quite frank about it. The British ruling-class weekly *The Economist* writes:

'Next year's living standard for many of the 240m Americans south of the Rio Grande is being decided at an intricate poker game being played between Latin American finance ministers and western financial institutions. At the table this week were the British banks, Argentina and Chile.'

The imperialists themselves admit that the fate of hundreds of millions - whether they shall starve or not - is being decided by a handful of finance capitalists! However, the people of the oppressed nations are not standing idly by. They are fighting back. So should we.

Nationalise the imperialist banks!
Liquidate all debts to the oppressed nations!

Steve Palmer

LEBANON

Behind a cloak of international diplomacy imperialism and Zionism continue their efforts to transform Lebanon into a puppet state at the expense of Palestinian and Lebanese hopes and lives. The widespread terror against the Palestinian people and their Lebanese allies is being sustained and joined by the reactionary forces of the Lebanese Army and the US, French and Italian troop contingents stationed in Beirut.

The Zionists intend to destroy any organised Palestinian presence in Lebanon and to permanently annex the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and part of southern Lebanon. Their imperialist backers thus hope to secure their oil, financial and strategic interests in the region.

Round ups and pillage

The partial Israeli withdrawal from West Beirut after the Sabra and Chatila massacres was marked by wholesale Zionist looting. Invaluable Palestinian historical documents and an airport computer were stolen, while Israeli troops helped themselves to TVs, cars and anything else they could load onto their lorries. As the Israelis left so the Lebanese army began a massive search and round-up operation in the Palestinian camps and working class Muslim areas of Beirut. The Lebanese Army is drawn from the people that form the fascist Phalange and is officered by former Phalangists. With the departure of the PLO, the Lebanese leftists forces in Beirut proved too weak to resist the combined Zionist and Lebanese Army attack or to defend their communities. Protected and actively assisted by the US, French and Italian troops the Lebanese army has ringed the Palestinian camps with heavy artillery and conducted house to house searches. David Hirst of *The Guardian* described the process:

'The Lebanese Army is ostensibly rounding up illegal aliens and criminals... they are blindfolded and

stripped to the waist, starved for a couple of days and beaten with electric wires.'

Thousands of Palestinians and Lebanese have been held and many are transferred by the Lebanese Army to Israeli concentration camps in southern Lebanon or are simply dumped near Syrian lines in eastern Lebanon. Simultaneously Lebanese left-wing militias have been disarmed and hundreds of their militants arrested along with their Palestinian comrades. No effort has however been made to disarm the Phalangist militias. They are being used as auxiliaries, free to attack and abduct their revolutionary political opponents.

As in Beirut so in southern Lebanon, occupied by 80,000 Israeli troops, Palestinian homes are being bulldozed and roundups carried out. The United Nations estimate that 60,000 people are still homeless following the Zionist bombardment. Many of these are starved of adequate food and medicine by the Israeli authorities which control the supplies. Consequently they face death this winter unless facilities are provided them. In addition, the Zionists are giving free reign to Christian fascist militias who have imposed a rule of terror, abduction and murder on Palestinian and Lebanese working class and peasant communities.

Over 9,000 PLO and Lebanese prisoners are currently being held in Israeli concentration camps in southern Lebanon. They are denied POW status and it is reported that prison protests against conditions in Ansar camp have

been fired upon by Israeli guards. Buoyed up by its successes Israel has confirmed its intention of annexing Lebanon south of the Litani river by announcing a permanent twenty-five mile 'security zone' on its northern border. Within this zone it has been reinforcing the fascist militia of Major Haddad with newly formed and Israeli equipped and paid bands. In this drive to destroy Palestinian and Lebanese left-wing organisation, the fascist Lebanese government of Amin Gemayel is being fully backed by US



Prisoners in concentration camp

imperialism. With US and other imperialist troops firmly lodged in Beirut, President Reagan has offered to increase their numbers and to provide the financial, technical and material means to build the Lebanese Army into a solid reactionary force in the area. This army, under the shadow of US and imperialist troops, would be the instrument to crush any resurgent popular movement challenging Zionism and imperialism.

The vultures descend

The terror against the Palestinian people has brought not an iota of concern from the Lebanese middle and upper classes. Like the capitalist multinationals and banks they are keen to see Lebanon restored to its former role as a base for imperialist exploitation of the whole region, and Beirut rebuilt as a playground for the vices of the rich.

In a gesture of gratitude the US-

groomed Phalangist and now President of Lebanon, Gemayel took the occasion of his October US visit to invite US companies to take a share in the billions of dollars worth of construction contracts on offer in Lebanon. The bombs that flattened six cities, thirty villages and fourteen Palestinian camps were made by US and British companies!

Dollars and sterling have been pouring into the Beirut banks and the British Bank of the Middle East is eager to recommence business in Lebanon again. The *New York Times* reports a new crop of potential clients in the real estate speculators that have been hungrily eyeing the Palestinian camps that border the Mediterranean coast as the bulldozers move in. 'Just watch' said one official, 'there is going to be more of Beirut and it is tempting.'

While Reagan, Thatcher and Foot have mouthed criticisms of the atrocities committed against the Palestinian and Lebanese people they have done nothing to stop them. On the contrary, arms supplies and trade with Israel have continued. Soldiers from twenty-nine British regiments assist units of the US Rapid Deployment Force policing the Sinai and thereby guarding Israel's southern flank. The imperialists are preparing to channel military aid towards their new client, the Lebanese state. Imperialist plans for the West Bank continue to deny the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and to deny their right to an independent Palestine. The imperialists consider this an achievement, an achievement won by imperialist force of arms. However, the Palestinian people are not subdued by terror. Throughout the occupied territories of Lebanon and Palestine they have continued to demonstrate their defiance, and their fighters have begun to regroup to spread guerilla warfare and reap just revenge on their Zionist enemies.

Defend the Palestinian and Lebanese People!
No imperialist plans for Palestine!

Trevor Rayne

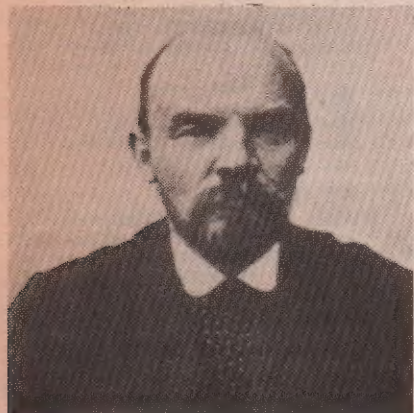
REDS

The film 'Reds' has been showing in our cinemas, recounting the life of John Reed. As an American journalist John Reed was in Petrograd at the time of the October revolution. Deeply impressed by what he saw, he wrote *10 Days that Shook the World* from his own first-hand experience. Lenin himself wrote of the book, 'It gives a truthful and most vivid exposition of the events so significant to the comprehension of what really is the Proletarian Revolution and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.' Recently republished by Penguin, the book is well worth reading to see how the revolution took place.

In Russia the First World War had intensified the misery of the poor, while the very rich continued to squander their wealth on pleasure. The young men sent to the war front were often short of food, clothes and weapons as deliveries failed and organisation broke down. Those at home were often starving, and thousands of landless families had poured from the countryside into the town slums.

FEBRUARY REVOLUTION

In February 1917 the workers and peasants of Russia, seething with hatred for their oppressors, brought about a revolution which toppled the despotic Czarist Monarchy. Political power, however, passed into the hands of a bourgeois Provisional Government headed by Kerensky, a supposed socialist. For the mass of people revolution meant ending of war, feeding the people and providing land or some means of livelihood for all. But the Provisional Government did not dare take such steps. It tried to make agreements to please the landlords and the capitalists. It continually postponed any major steps until a 'future' Assembly would be held. This Provisional Government which in the words of John Reed 'alternated between ineffective reforms and stern repressive measures' was supported by all shades of 'socialists' and particularly by the Mensheviks, who in May actually joined the Provisional Government. The Mensheviks were like our Labour Party and middle class socialists. They talked of socialism and revolution but wanted neither. John Reed described them as 'the party of the socialist intellectuals... who took the side of the propertied classes.' According to the Mensheviks, John Reed writes 'the Russian masses were not educated enough to take over the power' and that 'Russia was not economically ripe for social revolution'.



Lenin

In opposition to the Provisional Government and their opportunist socialist allies and supporters stood the revolutionary party of the Bolsheviks who expressed the desires of the oppressed masses: peace, bread and freedom. The Bolsheviks saw the Soviets, not the Provisional Government, as the instrument for the workers' and peasants' political power. Lenin who headed the Bolsheviks wrote that the Soviet 'is an organisation of the workers, the embryo of a workers government, the representative of the interests of the entire mass of the poor section of the population... which is striving for peace, bread and freedom.'

REDS

This month we celebrate the 65th anniversary of the Russian Revolution. On 26 October 1917 (7 November new calendar) the workers and peasants of Russia led by the Bolshevik Party seized the reins of power and began to organise the country in the interests of the poor and the oppressed. Against all odds they succeeded in beating off the counter-revolution and the attempts by Britain, France and their allies to crush them. For the first time the capitalist system had been overthrown and the Soviet Union became an example and inspiration to the working class all over the world.

The refusal of the Provisional Government and the Mensheviks to meet the masses' demands led to a growing wave of political discontent which resulted in a spontaneous uprising of the people in July. They took to the streets demanding power to the Soviets—ie power to the people through their own Soviets at factory, village and area level. The Bolsheviks put themselves at the head of this movement, and when the Government crushed it, those who were not imprisoned had to go into hiding. As John Reed says, 'They took the crude, simple desires of the workers, soldiers and peasants, and from them built their immediate programme.' Their programme was indeed simple and heartfelt: Bread—Peace—Land. For fighting for this programme, the Bolsheviks were subjected to vicious persecution. At the head of the persecutors were the Mensheviks who took the lead in smashing up Bolshevik printing presses and who spread the slander that Lenin was a German agent.

But once again, during August and early September, the country began to rise in a ferment of political upheaval. Thousands of newspapers, leaflets, pamphlets were being produced and seized upon as the Russian masses prepared to fight for 'All Power to the Soviets'.

'ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS'

In the Central Committee of the Soviets three main factions appeared. The right-wing Mensheviks said that the government must include representatives of the rich bourgeoisie. The 'centre' parties wanted a purely socialist government to rule. The Bolsheviks demanded that the Government summon a Congress of Soviets to take power.

The rightwing controlled the Central Committee of Soviets, and managed to pack out a conference which voted for a consultative parliament and a group of Ministers run by the bourgeoisie and landowners.

Lenin could see that this just meant more oppression for the working class and the poor peasantry, more starvation and misery as the war would continue to drag on. The Russian ruling class was in the pocket of the major imperialist nations. Its interests were entirely with imperialism and could not be swayed by toothless parliaments. So in September Lenin began to argue for the need for insurrection: 'Either we must abandon our slogan "All Power to the Soviets" or else we must make an insurrection. There is no middle course.'

All over the country incidents developed.

● 30,000 miners organised themselves in Kharkov. Armed forces dispersed them and the mineowners locked them out. They declared a general strike.

● In Kaluga the Soviet freed some political prisoners. Government troops bombarded their headquarters.

Meanwhile, from the rank and file of the Soviets a movement began to develop calling for All Power to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. As the tension built up the other, 'moderate', Socialist papers became intensely hostile to the Bolsheviks and their policy, until they finally sided with the redundant 'Provisional Government' against the mass of working people and the Bolsheviks.



1919 poster honouring the Red Fleet

MILITARY COMMITTEES

So far the battles had been mainly in meeting-rooms, via debates and resolutions. The scene changed in September when the Government decided to move the Petrograd garrison, the majority of whom were pro-Bolshevik and replace them with loyalist Cossack troops. The Petrograd Soviet responded to this threat by forming a Military Revolutionary Committee from their soldiers' section. When all the Committee's proposals were refused by the Commander, the Petrograd regiments passed a resolution, no longer to recognise the Provisional Government. From then on they considered the Petrograd Soviet as their government.

On 24 October the soldiers took over the Telephone Exchange and captured the Winter Palace without any bloodshed. No looting was allowed, in the name of revolutionary discipline. Power was in the hands of the Soviets!

The first acts of the Military Revolutionary Committee were to free members of the Peasant Land Committees, imprisoned by the Provisional Government, abolish capital punishment in the army; and forbid any pillaging or speculation.

Nearly all the other 'leftwing' parties, the Mensheviks included, opposed this direct and decisive action. They could not bear to see the working people take affairs into their own hands and challenge the rule of law. Seeing the movement slipping out of their control they turned the full force of their hatred against that movement, and against the Bolsheviks who found themselves at its head. The powerful Union of Railway

Workers and the government employees joined these 'moderate' parties, and together with the old government they formed a 'Committee for Salvation' to crush the power of the Soviets. John Reed was struck by the great contrast in appearance between the men of the Committee for Salvation: well-fed and well-dressed, and those of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers and Soldiers Deputies: 'poor men, bent and scarred in the brute struggle for existence'.

It is significant to see what the first proclamations of that Congress were. Having wrested power from the dithering hands of the 'moderates', their first proclamation carried unanimously was 'to the people of all the belligerent countries', offering peace with no annexations, no indemnities and the right of people to self-determination. Their second declaration was to alleviate the plight of the peasantry. They abolished private ownership of the land without compensation. All land was to be divided up by the Land Committees formed by the peasants in each area. Their third step was an appeal to all the Soviets to prevent anti-Jewish action and to stamp out pogroms.

John Reed comments 'So plunged the Bolsheviks ahead, irresistible, overriding hesitation and opposition—the only people in Russia who had a definite programme of action while the others talked for eight long months.'

ISOLATION!

The telegrams poured in announcing more and more regiments voting to support the Military Revolutionary Committee, and more such committees being elected in other areas. The Congress of Soviets began to put its decisions into practice. Meanwhile the 'leftwing' parties pleaded with the Bolsheviks to form a Coalition government. They insisted that the Bolshevik Party was 'isolated' which rather amused the party's newspaper Pravda. It replied 'We ridicule these coalitions with political parties whose most prominent members are petty journalists of doubtful reputation; our 'coalition' is that of the proletariat and the revolutionary Army with the poor peasants...'

What a conception of 'isolation' these parties had! The Bolsheviks were expressing the deepest aspirations of the most oppressed layers of Russian society and were recognised by the mass of soldiers, workers and increasingly by the poor peasants as their party. So much for being isolated! However, they did face the hostility and venom of major Trade Unions which hampered the revolution in a criminal fashion.

The Menshevik-controlled Railway Workers Union refused any cooperation, as did the Telegraph workers. Dispatches and mail could not be sent by Bolsheviks as they were not delivered. Even the transporting of soldiers to the

front was prevented by railway workers sabotage in an effort to bring down the new regime. The bank employees went on strike so no money was available. The telephone workers walked out. Local government employees were on strike, backed up by bankers and businessmen. Almost all those who had enjoyed a proper education were against the Bolsheviks so it was impossible to recruit new staff.

SUCCESS

Finally the balance began to shift, a railway workers held mass meetings condemning the action of their own leaders and voting support for the Congress of Soviets. To the amazement of their enemies both in Russia and the rest of the world, the Bolsheviks were succeeding in holding on to power and making advances.

At the first meeting of the newly re-elected Central Committee of Soviets three decrees were approved:

- rules for the Press, forbidding incitement to resistance and any deliberate falsifying of the news.
- A moratorium on house-rents.
- the establishment of a workers' militia.

All over Russia Bolsheviks were forming Military Revolutionary Committees, and the middle class and 'moderate' Socialists were arming for civil war under the banner of 'Committees for Salvation'.

The new regime began to issue decrees for building the structures of socialism, including workers' control of industry, a social insurance scheme, the abolition of the old courts and the setting-up of people's tribunals.

How much more would have been accomplished in those early days of the revolution had it not been for the fiercest opposition of all those who had claimed to represent the Russian working class and the peasantry. The revolution itself did not spill a drop of blood. The attempts to overthrow that revolution and crush the self-organisation of the working class took the lives of thousands of the most dedicated men and women. The old ruling class, the once rich and powerful Russians, found a ready ally in the compromising 'moderate' middle-class socialists. This unholy alliance was then backed up with all the power of the Western imperialist nations, which saw in Russia's revolution a preview of their own fate. And yet in spite of it all the October Revolution succeeded.

John Reed explained how: 'Not by compromise with the propertied classes,



Demonstration in Petrograd against Kerensky's provisional government

or with the other political leaders; not by conciliating the old Government mechanism, did the Bolsheviks conquer the power. Nor by the organised violence of a small clique. If the masses all over Russia had not been ready for insurrection it must have failed. The only reason for Bolshevik success lay in their accomplishing the vast and simple desires of the most profound strata of the people, calling them to the work of tearing down and destroying the old, and afterwards, in the smoke of falling ruins, co-operating with them to erect the framework of the new...'

Sheila Marston

RCG-FRFI MONTHLY Round-up

● Glasgow PLO support

On 28 October Glasgow FRFI supporters held a meeting entitled Down with Zionism! Victory to the PLO!

The meeting in Woodside Halls was well attended. Those present heard a speaker from FRFI and a comrade from the General Union of Palestinian Students. Supporters of the Irish Republican Movement, a comrade from Pakistan, Palestinians and a group of 3 women who had travelled 15 miles all took part in the discussion. The need for continued propaganda and education was stressed and a £5 donation was made from the collection to the Palestinian struggle.

● Tyneside Prison picket

A picket of Durham prison was held on Saturday 6 November. The picket was called by Tyneside Action Committee on Ireland (TACI) and was supported by members of Sinn Féin, supporters of the Organisation of Iranian Peoples Fedaii Guerrillas and the local Troops Out Movement. Banners were displayed from TACI, the Committee in Defence of Political Prisoners (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) and TOM.

The picket lasted from 1-3pm and speeches and chants were kept up the whole time, much to the anger of the screws. Messages of support to the Irish POWs were read out.

TACI is determined to carry on the solidarity work it has begun and will be organising more events in the near future.

Anyone wishing for information about future events please contact A S King c/o Porters Lodge, Newcastle University, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

● FRFI persecuted by legal system

The persecution of one FRFI supporter, Gordon Teal, continues. He and Bill Bolloten were arrested in May 1981 for selling FRFI in Chapeltown, Leeds. Both were acquitted on appeal of all the charges against them – breach of the peace, peddling without a licence and obstruction of the police – in Leeds Crown Court. Both now find themselves back in the Crown Court following an appeal by the police to the Divisional Court. The Divisional Court overturned Bill and Gordon's successful appeal. Because he was taken to the Divisional Court by the police, Gordon Teal had to pay £147 legal aid contributions. Gordon Teal then informed the Law Society of the extra expenses of his bus fares to and from work that were not originally taken into account by the Law Society in fixing the sum of £147. Gordon Teal was then reassessed by the Law Society. Instead of the expected reduction in his legal aid contributions, the sum was increased to £305!

Gordon Teal is a nurse, and the most nurses can expect in their current wage claim is a 12% rise. Moreover, this £305 is greater than Gordon Teal's monthly take home pay. His September wage was £298 – and this includes weekend and evening work. In the meantime the police pay nothing as their costs come out of Central Funds. Bob Cryer MP has agreed to raise a question about this in the House of Commons.

FRFI supporters in Leeds are already very busy campaigning around and collecting money for the Precinct Six Defence Campaign. We are appealing to FRFI

readers to rush money to us to enable us to fight this 18 month old case against Bill Bolloten and Gordon Teal. Send donations to: Leeds Three Defence Campaign, c/o FRFI, LAP, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 2.

● Street Meetings Defended!

The fight to hold street meetings has won two victories – in Tooting and Wood Green.

9 October saw SLISC return to the scene of where the Tooting 3 had been arrested on 15 May. Tom Cox MP attended as an observer, as did the NCCL. Despite the presence of a Chief Inspector and 2 van loads of police, SLISC supporters, joined by picketers from the non-stop picket of South Africa House, FRFI, NLISC and RCL supporters, held a highly successful street meeting. Local people donated £26 while we were there.

NLISC not only re-established its right to hold street meetings in Wood Green but also won the local council to declare the Library area a 'free speech area'. With the help of Reg Race MP, and local councillors Jeremy Corbyn, Bernie Grant and Nigel Knowles the police were prevented from interfering. Moreover the police have been forced to return the literature and badges they stole in July!

AG and Pauline Sellars

● Tooting 3/May Day 2 Trials

The Tooting 3 – Adrian Pyke, Mark Sealey and Maxine Walker – appeared at Wells Street Magistrates Court on Monday 11 October. The Magistrate, A Jennings demonstrated her reactionary bias against the defendants. She ignored the evidence of the only impartial witness – a passer-by who testified that the street meeting on 15 May, when the 3 were arrested, did not obstruct him or any other passers-by. She ignored the whole defence case and as soon as the defence closed she immediately found all 3 guilty without giving any reasons. Adrian Pyke and Mark Sealey were fined £20 plus £20 costs each. Maxine Walker was fined £15 plus £15 costs. £110 for speaking out on Ireland!

The next day the May Day 2 – Terry O'Halloran and Chris Procter – also appeared in front of magistrate Jennings! Terry O'Halloran who had been a witness in the Tooting 3 case objected to the case being heard by Jennings. Jennings separated the 2 insisting on hearing Chris Procter's case herself. Again she showed her bias by describing the slogan 'British army murderers out!' as 'abrasive' and remarking that 'freedom of speech depends on good manners!' Police trickery was exposed when they claimed that they could not trace Inspector Summers – the police Inspector who harassed Irish solidarity supporters on the march. The defence issued a summons to bring him to court. Despite the fact that the arresting officers' pack of lies about the 2 being involved in a fracas with bystanders was flatly contradicted by all the defence witnesses and Inspector Summers, Jennings again instantly found Chris Procter guilty of breach of the peace and bound him over for a year against a sum of £50.

Terry O'Halloran in front of a different magistrate but on the same charge and with the same evidence was acquitted! The Toot-

ing 3 and Chris Procter will be appealing. The Balham 6 – Gerald Denver, Ace Kelly, Terry O'Halloran, Seamus O'Mahoney, Chris Procter and Adrian Pyke – appear at South-Western Magistrates Court, Lavender Hill, (near BR Clapham Junction) on 16/17 November. SUPPORT THE PICKETS EACH DAY AT 9.30am! SEND URGENTLY NEEDED MONEY TO PAY FOR FINES, LEGAL COSTS AND APPEALS: Send donations to May Day 2/Tooting 3 Defence Campaign, BM Box 4835, London, WC1N 3XX (Cheques/POs payable to May Day 2/Tooting 3 Defence Campaign) Terry O'Halloran

● Roundwood victory!

Police attempts to criminalise and bankrupt all involved in fighting for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland received a setback in Willesden Magistrates Court London on October 19. FRFI supporter Jonathan Bullock, whose arrest on 4 July was reported in FRFI 21, was acquitted of charges of wilful obstruction of the highway at this year's Roundwood Irish festival. Despite attempts to delay the hearing a further two months in order to increase defence costs and inconvenience defence witnesses, the case was heard with PC Gillard 365 Q insisting that he was a 'very polite police officer', and inventing a story of obstruction and abuse which the magistrates couldn't pretend to believe. Nevertheless costs against the police were refused by a bench already embarrassed at having to dismiss the police case.

● Bradford Irish Solidarity Committee

Bradford Irish Solidarity Committee successfully held a street meeting in Bradford city centre on Saturday 23 October. On previous occasions BISC supporters had been harassed by the police and threatened with arrest for holding street meetings in support of the Irish people. This time a West Yorkshire County Councillor came to observe the meeting, and the police kept their

distance. Over 120 people signed BISC's petition calling for the withdrawal of troops, and many people expressed support for BISC's work. The meeting also attracted publicity in the local paper. Further meetings are being planned over the coming weeks. Supporters of the Irish people in Bradford are urged to contact BISC and support our street meetings.

Contact BISC at: c/o Box BISC, LAP, 59 Cookridge St., Leeds 2. Bill Hughes

● Defend Free Speech! Defend Ron Brown!

Ron Brown MP was arrested and charged with breach of the peace during Thatcher's visit to Scotland in September.

His 'crime' was to stand in front of Thatcher and tell her that the working class in Scotland did not want her there. Before she got anywhere near him, he was thrown into a police van and held for 6 hours. He was only one of 200-300 protestors that day who were expressing their hatred of the Tory government.

Ron Brown told FRFI supporters that the defence of his right to protest is a defence of all hard won democratic rights. It is important to show the fullest possible support on the day of his trial on 25 November at 10am at Glasgow Sheriff Court. At the time of writing a defence campaign is being set up. Witnesses to the arrest, and actions of support are urgently needed. The campaign can be contacted: c/o J Hill, Ruskin House, Windsor Street, Edinburgh.

SUPPORT COMMITTEES

● DUNDEE

Dundee Irish Republican Solidarity Committee meets to plan activity on November 14. Details from APRN, Starry Plough or FRFI paper sellers

● SOUTH LONDON

South London Irish Solidarity Committee meets on Thursdays 18 November and 2 December. 8.15, Library, 108 South Lambeth Road, Brixton. Help us collect for Defence Fund, every Sunday at Brixton Tube, 2pm. For information write to SLISC, c/o BM 4835 London WC1N 3XX

● NORTH LONDON

Irish Solidarity Committee meets on Fridays 12 and 26 November, 10 December, at Camden Labour Club, Carol Street, London NW5. For information write to NLISC, c/o BM 4835, London WC1N 3XX

● BRADFORD

Irish Solidarity Committee. For details contact BISC c/o Box BISC, LAP, 59 Cookridge Street, Leeds 7

● GLASGOW

Irish Freedom Action Committee meets weekly. For details write to GIFAC c/o Box 15, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.

● LEEDS

Precinct 6 Defence Committee meets every Wednesday in Leeds Trades Club at 7.30pm. All Welcome.

● TYNESIDE

Action Committee on Ireland meets weekly. For details write to AS King c/o Porters Lodge, Newcastle University, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

FRFI SUPPORTER GROUPS

● NORTH LONDON FRFI Supporters Group meets on Tuesdays 16 November and 14 December at 7.30, Camden Labour Club, Carol Street, London NW1

● LEEDS FRFI Supporters Group meets on Thursdays 25 November, 9 December at Leeds Trades Council Club, Saville Mount, Leeds 7. 7.30pm. Further details from Leeds FRFI, c/o LAP 59 Cookridge St, Leeds 2.

● SOUTH LONDON Meets fortnightly. Details from local FRFI sellers.

● DUNDEE meets fortnightly. Details from FRFI sellers or from Box 40, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh

● EDINBURGH meets fortnightly. Details from FRFI sellers or from Box 40, First of May Bookshop, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh

● MANCHESTER Details from local FRFI sellers

● BRADFORD Details from local FRFI sellers

● LIVERPOOL Details from local FRFI sellers

● BRISTOL Details from local FRFI sellers

● BIRMINGHAM Details from local FRFI sellers

● GLASGOW Details from local FRFI sellers

EVENTS

13 – 26 November

● NORTH LONDON

Street Meeting
Smash Police Censorship on Ireland!
Saturday 13 November
Wood Green Library 11.30
North London Irish Solidarity Committee

● LONDON

African National Congress
70th Anniversary
Celebration Concert
Camden Centre, Bidborough St WC1
Sunday November 14 at 3.15pm
Tickets £2.50 and £1.50 from ANC,
Box 38, 28 Penton Street, London N1
9PR
or on the door from 2.30pm
DONATIONS WELCOME

● SOUTH LONDON

Picket
Support the Balham 6!
Drop the Charges Now!
Tuesday/Wednesday 16-17 November
South Western Magistrates Court,
Lavender Hill, SW11
Called by South London
Irish Solidarity Committee

● LEEDS

Public Forum
Victory to the PLO!
Thursday 18 November
Chapeltown Community Centre,
Reginald Terrace, Leeds 7 7.30pm
Called by Leeds FRFI supporters

● NORTH LONDON

Conference on Ireland
Building an Irish Solidarity Movement
Saturday 20 November
Caxton House, St John's Way,
Archway, N19 9.15-5.30
Called by North London
Irish Solidarity Committee

● DUNDEE

Street Meeting
Smash Apartheid in South Africa!
Free All Political Prisoners!
Victory to the African National
Congress
Saturday 20 November
City Square 2pm
Called by Dundee FRFI

● MANCHESTER

March and Rally
Manchester Martyrs
Commemoration – executed on 23rd
November 1867 for asserting the
freedom of Ireland
Sunday 21 November
Assemble 1pm in Alexandra Park
Alexandra Road, Moss Side.

● SOUTH LONDON

Public Forum
Britain and the Irish Revolution
Tuesday 23 November
Jeffreys Library, Jeffreys Road
(Stockwell tube)
7.30. Admission 20p
Called by South London FRFI

27 Nov – 3 Dec

● SOUTH LONDON

Street Meeting
Support the right to hold Street
Meetings!
Defend Democratic Rights Now!
Saturday 27 November
Tooting Broadway Tube
1.45-3.45
Called by South London
Irish Solidarity Committee

● BRADFORD

Street Meeting
Saturday 27 November
Outside Shoppers Paradise,
Forster Square 11am-1pm
Called by Bradford Irish Solidarity
Committee

● DUNDEE

24-Hour Picket in Solidarity with South
African Political Prisoners
Free All South African Political
Prisoners!
Smash Apartheid Now!
Saturday 27 November
Begins 8am City Square
All Welcome. Bring banners etc.
All interested in helping to organise
the picket contact FRFI paper sellers

● DUNDEE

Public Forum
Smash Apartheid in South Africa!
Free All Political Prisoners!
Victory to the ANC!
Thursday 2 December
Wellgate Library
Conference Room, 7.30pm
Admission 25p
Called by Dundee FRFI supporters
group

● MANCHESTER

Public Forum
Building an Irish Solidarity movement
Friday 3rd December
Lass O'Gowrie Public House
Charles Street (Next to BBC Oxford
Road) 7.30
Called by Manchester FRFI

4 – 10 December

● EDINBURGH

Film Show
'Generations of Resistance'
The South African Freedom Struggle
Tuesday 7 December
Edinburgh Trades Council
Picardy Place, 7.30pm
£1 waged, 50p unemployed
Called by Edinburgh FRFI

● NORTH LONDON

Public Forum
Free All South African Political
Prisoners! Release Nelson Mandela!
Speakers: FRFI, City Branch AAM.
Tuesday 7 December, Camden Labour
Club, 2 Carol St. NW1, 7.30pm called
by N London FRFI.

● GLASGOW

Public Meeting
Free All South African Political
Prisoners!
Smash Apartheid Now!
Thursday 9 December
7.30. Woodside Halls,
Clarendon St (off Maryhill Rd)
Admission 25p
Called by Glasgow FRFI

11 – 17 December

● BRADFORD

Picket
Defend Lanre and Linda Fehintola!
Drop the Charges Now!
Wednesday 15 December
Bradford Courts 10.30
Called by Lanre and Linda Fehintola
Defence Committee

1st of May Bookshop
43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh.
Radical Bookshop. Best of its kind in
Scotland. Stocks all major socialist
literature and has extensive selection
of black and anti-imperialist literature.
Also stocks Republican News and
Starry Plough.
Open 10-6 Monday to Saturday

WINTER FUND DRIVE

FRFI NEEDS £500 PER ISSUE SUBSIDISE THE PAPER WHICH STANDS UP FOR YOUR RIGHTS!

With FRFI 23 we almost made it to the £500 mark! We received £465.48: a prisoner contributed £3 from his savings, Mr A H H Knott who is unemployed donated 50p and other individual supporters sent £24.60. Thank you!

The list of FRFI Supporter Groups is headed by South London with £150.25 – well done! – followed by North London £81.36, Edinburgh £70.77, Manchester £67.20, Bradford £26.05, Leeds £20.42, Liverpool £13.95, Dundee £5.13 and Bristol £2.25.

Unless we raise £500 with each issue of FRFI we will be forced to put up the price of the paper. Many FRFI readers could then no longer afford to buy it. Act now by subsidising FRFI! Send us your donations or hand it to your FRFI seller. Organise fund raising events – socials, jumble sales, collections.

We will publish all contributions to the FRFI fund in this column. If you want your name or that of your organisation mentioned alongside the donation please say so.

Make your donation payable to 'Larkin Publications' and return to: FRFI BCM Box 5909, London WC1N 3XX

I/we want to donate £ _____ to the FRFI Fund.

Name/Organisation _____

Address _____

I do/do not want you to mention my name/organisation _____

Letters

LEEDS ARREST

Dear FRFI,
On Wednesday 20 October 2 of my friends came to my house. They had come from the Palace (a youth project) where 2 policemen had come down looking for me, enquiring about some burglaries in the Harehills and Chapeltown areas. One, called PC Skinner, left a phone number and a message to contact him. I phoned him up and he asked if I would like to come up to the police station to talk to him or to meet him somewhere. I arranged to meet him at the Hayfield pub. I was waiting there for about 15 minutes and all of a sudden 3 cop cars, with about 8 cops in them, came swerving into the car park. One came out and asked if I was Levi and asked me to escort him up to Chapeltown police station to talk about some burglaries. I did not want to go and asked why we couldn't talk here. He said that it would be better up there, and I refused to go. He then asked if I would come by free will or by force. I replied that it would take more than you lot to do that. I then left.

On Thursday I decided to get some legal advice and went down to Chapeltown Law Centre. A guy came up to the police station with me to make sure everything was alright. He found out when we got there that it was his sister who had been burgled so he couldn't represent me. He says that he would go and get someone else. I had no intention of answering any questions while no one else was there. I was put in the cells until someone came. But he didn't come back and no one else came to represent me. Later I was taken to the interview room. They tried to frighten me saying if I didn't confess I'd be locked up for Christmas and all that thing and I'd be away from my girl. Also that there were a lot more burglaries they hadn't solved and they would pin more on me. I kept on denying it all and was taken back to the cells after being charged. I was kept there until I was taken out to have my finger prints and photo taken. They didn't ask me they just took them, even though they have already got them.

I was held in Chapeltown police station from 3 in the afternoon until 8. While I was there my girlfriend was at her friends across the road when she saw a police car pull up outside my flat and two policemen get out. My friends went over to the flat and saw them put the key in the door and go into my flat — they must have got my key from my things at the police station. They searched the flat but found nothing.

At 8 o'clock I was taken down to the Bridewell police station in town and held overnight. I was given nothing to eat all the time despite asking and I wasn't allowed to make a phone call. They had said to me that they did not beat people up, but they were quite prepared to starve me! I was up in the Magistrates Court the next morning. The police got me a solicitor. They tried to deny me bail as I might interfere with their enquiries. I got bail though but am on curfew from 9.00pm to 7.00am and have to report to the police station everyday. I am up again in 4 weeks and will be remanded again, then I'll be in Crown Court.

I've done nothing wrong. I was thinking of settling down and then I get all this thrown at me. If other people know what's happening others can prepare themselves. We are not the ones that are corrupted, the ones that are corrupted are the ones up there in the police station. We can only take so much, people have got to stand up for their rights.
Levi
Leeds

PUERTO RICO

Dear FRFI,
I'm one of the oppressed youth of this Imperialist state, but I wonder just how many readers of FRFI know of the struggle the people of Puerto Rico are fighting.

Well the struggle is the same as many countries all over the globe are suffering, the same as the Irish, the Palestinians and the people of El Salvador, Honduras and South Africa.

They are being ruled by an Imperialist Government who receives aid by both the way of money and arms by one of the world's super powers, in this case the USA.

The people of Puerto Rico are now beginning to resist the ways of the government in the way of the *Puerto Rican Freedom Fighters* who are demanding the people of Puerto Rico be free from the Fascist ways of the present government to live their own lives in the way they may choose.

So I would like to ask the readers of FRFI to spare a thought for the Puerto Rican Freedom Fighters each time they think of the IRA, the PLO, the INLA and all the other brave revolutionaries in the world who are fighting for a world free from Racism and Imperialism. Remember those immortal words '**Power to the People**'. Yours Unitedly,
Citizen Wolfie Smith
(British Free Puerto Rico Movement) Leeds

Please note our address is:
**FRFI,
BCM Box 5909,
London WC1N 3XX**
SEND US YOUR LETTERS
We welcome letters from readers. Please keep them as short as you can

POLICE HARASSMENT

Dear FRFI,
At the time of the major riots in Brixton, Toxteth and others I was in Woolwich. There was, as the police would say, a disturbance. After this little riot I was walking back home. A police van stopped on a bridge ahead of me. I walked past looking as innocent as possible. 2 got out, they hit me and kicked me to the ground without any reason. I felt sick. Even though I'm quite big they lifted me up and held me by my feet over the bridge. It wouldn't have been so bad if I was over a river, but there was no river, there was a motorway. They started shouting abuse at me and they both let go of my legs for a fraction of a second but caught my feet. After this they hauled me back and left me being sick on the pavement — no witnesses. They wanted to scare me, they succeeded but only for a short while.

Another incident with the Old Bill I had was just last month when I was slapped about and kicked to the ground on my way to a party. The reason for this was because of an alarm going off across the road and because I was a 'silly shit' (No witnesses).

WE NEED THE POLICE LIKE A FISH NEEDS A BICYCLE.
Daniel

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

Dear FRFI
Without doubt the election results must be the greatest morale booster the Republican Movement has received in the past 13 years. The election of five Republican candidates has shocked the world. For years the British propaganda machine has told the world that those engaged in the armed struggle in Ireland against the British had little or no support from the nationalist community whom they claimed to represent.

Last year's election victories by the late Bobby Sands POW, Claran Doherty POW, Tom Agnew and Owen Carron were attributed by British, Free State, Unionist and SDLP politicians to be the result of the emotion involved with the heroic hunger

strike.

The Assembly election victories have given their answer to that lie. Like any other guerrilla army the IRA couldn't exist without the support of the people and the people have now given the Republican Movement the mandate to speak on their behalf.

The so-called 'Workers' Party' yet again failed miserably to attract people to vote for their anti-republican policies. Indeed Sinn Fein received more votes in Fermanagh/South Tyrone than the twelve 'Workers' Party candidates' first preference votes put together.

The result that really made the headlines was in West Belfast where Gerry Adams topped the

poll with almost 10,000 first preference votes more than the total of the three SDLP candidates put together. When one realises that Sinn Fein put their election machine in West Belfast together in four weeks as opposed to an SDLP election machine which has been going for over 10 years this was indeed a considerable feat.

The most heartwarming aspect of the Sinn Fein victory from my personal point of view was the work carried out especially by the youth and women throughout the Six Counties. This augurs well for the future and one can see the nationalist youth playing a much more active role in the struggle against British rule in Ireland.
Michael D

LIFE IN DURHAM PRISON

Dear Editor,
I was in most parts of Durham Prison during my 2 year term — Remand Wing — Prison itself — and spent 6 days in Solitary. This consists of one day in a cell without bed or bedding, one chair is provided at night but not through the day. Meals are one cob of Bread and one Jug of water. Next day you get bed and one blanket very rough — no sheets — no pillow and the usual prison meals. Next day back to the routine of no bed — one seat — one cob of bread and water.

During my stay in Durham I received from my family the *Morning Star*, *Tribune*, and the *Guardian* as I wanted something decent to read. The arrangement whereby I received these papers went something like this: In the main office (PTO office) on the bottom landing, 6 guards. 'Your name is FitzPatrick?' 'Yes.' 'Say Sir you bastard.' 'Yes Sir!' 'Can you read?' 'Yes Sir!' No2 Guard butts into the conversation. 'Of course he can read. He is one of the brainy ones. He reads the *Guardian*.' No3 Guard: 'So F... brains he's in here for hitting

a bloke over the head with a bar. What's this paper here' — holding *Morning Star* by the tips of his fingers. 'A Socialist newspaper' I said. No4 Guard: 'Fuck Me. We got a commie here'. Tears the *Morning Star* in shreds. 'Wipe it on your F... Commie arse'. No5 Guard: 'Tribune? What's a F... Tribune. Answer you bastard', shaking me by the neck of my shirt. 'It's a Labour paper' I say. No6 Guard: 'Fuck me! This fellow knows all the answers. All except how to stay out of clink the stupid C...'

Loud laughter from all 6. The *Tribune* is thrown into the waste basket and the *Guardian* is thrown on the floor. I pick up the *Guardian* and go back to my cell on the top 4th Landing. This treatment and worse is meted out to ALL prisoners...

When I first arrived in Durham Prison I ate the porridge, ladled out from a big container. This I did for one month and never noticed that the long term men did not share my enthusiasm for this meal. After being in prison for a month one of the old lags informed me that the Guards spit into it. As you can imagine — no more porridge. One visitor a

month was allowed. In order to get a visit you were first stripped naked (this was before you went into the visitors room) and various pokings went on as you were told to 'touch your toes'. The visit lasted 10 minutes. As you came back to the prison you were again stripped naked and the indignities went on once again. This harassment was so degrading that some of the more sensitive men refused to have visitors at all...

There was little or no heating in the cells during the severe winter and it was compulsory to do one hour's exercise even in the snow. Clothing provided (winter or summer) was 1 shirt, 1 pair underwear pants only, no singlet, 1 pair of socks to last 2 weeks. 1 pair of light shoes (very good for keeping the snow out). For 3 months I had to wring my socks out after exercise. 1 pair trousers and thin jacket.

Quote anything I have written if in some small measure it helps destroy the evil behind prison walls.

Good luck to your paper. To your Socialist Cause.

JF
Durham

Send Christmas and New Year greetings to political prisoners in apartheid gaols

Dear Editor,
1982 will be the 20th Christmas that Nelson Mandela will have spent separated from his family because of his continuing incarceration in the dungeons of apartheid. The trials and tribulations of the Mandela family are not unique. There will be hundreds of families of Namibian and South African political prisoners who will miss their mothers or fathers, their daughters or sons this year.

May I therefore take this opportunity to invite your readers to send Christmas and New Year greetings to the banned and banished, and to the families of political prisoners and those who have been executed or murdered in detention in South Africa and Namibia.

For the hundreds of victims of apartheid laws such greetings are both welcomed and appreciated. Please write to us for a list of names and addresses enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.

Yours sincerely,
Abdul Minty
Honorary Secretary
Anti-Apartheid Movement
89 Charlotte St
Leeds W1

NELSON MANDELA

Dear FRFI,
On Wednesday 13 October, the Leeds Labour County Council named the Leeds Civic Gardens after Nelson Mandela as part of the start of an international Campaign for the release of Nelson Mandela and others imprisoned by the white South African regime.

The local press article is against anything in support of anti-racist and anti-imperialist struggle. They said that Nelson Mandela was just a Human Rights Campaigner imprisoned for his beliefs. Also they printed several statements from the public who said that the gardens should have been named after the Falklands Victory or after someone who is pro-British.

If the local paper had asked me I would have said the same as many of the black youth from Chapeltown would have said, Nelson Mandela was more than a Human Rights Campaigner. He was a black South African, like the other 19 million black South Africans ruled by 4.5 million privileged white racists, stripped of his human rights. Nelson Mandela like many others swore his life to the liberation of all people oppressed by Imperialism and Apartheid in South Africa and around the world.

Although the South African

Government would like Nelson Mandela dead, they cannot kill him because he is too well known throughout the world for his part in the struggle of oppressed people in South Africa. He, along with many other captured liberation fighters, is kept in a South African prison, and treated as a dumb animal.

But this does not kill their spirit of freedom. For black people in Britain the feeling of been treated as a dumb animal is the same. Throughout their lives, black people in Britain have been pulling the donkey cart trying to catch the carrot at the end of the stick. Last summer's riots showed that black people were no longer prepared to tolerate the oppression in Britain from the government and ruling class. I have found my heritage and my tradition and so have many other blacks. We follow our father, Nelson Mandela and his brothers and sisters in the struggle against Apartheid and Imperialism. Their struggle is our blood which shall keep us fighting against Imperialism and Apartheid. Victory to the oppressed people of South Africa. Victory to Nelson Mandela and the Liberation Fighters.
GB
Leeds

ANTI NUCLEAR NEWS...

Dear Friends,
As an FRFI supporter who has been active in the Anti-Nuclear movement, I would dearly love to see a small area of your paper, say a quarter of a page allotted to nuclear incidents. i.e. Heading... 'Your latest Anti-Nuclear News Corner', always giving the latest total of Nuclear Test Explosions, of which there have been 1,233 since 1945 according to the *Observer*, 30 November 1980. Since then the French had about 10 at the Mururoa Atoll.

Wise Magazine is the International Anti-Nuke mag: which gives the latest Nuclear Reactor accidents, who's mining for Uranium and where, and who's dumping it where they shouldn't. *Wise* also gives up to date info on Safe Energy Alternatives.

It would bring in more support I'm sure if you could just draw attention to nuclear issues as well, in a small way, in fact it seems important to me, for a revolutionary paper to give this a mention as the issue is so vital to the survival of all living creatures.

In 1975 the Atomic Energy Commission (USA) Biological and Medical Advisory Board concluded 'Fallout from Nuclear Tests through 1956, far from being devoid of genetic significance seemed likely to produce between 2,500 and 13,000 major genetic defects per year in the global population'. Also a United Nations report estimates that 150,000 people have been killed or will die from Nuclear Tests that have taken place. (*Observer* 30 November 1980) same article. The Atomic Energy Commission quote is from 'Nuclear Power' by Walter Patterson (ex nuclear physicist) p142.

Thank you for putting out a really good paper. Also I would like to say how sorry I am to hear Garvey and Co (Precinct 6) are having trouble. I do hope they win the appeal. Without those sort of people there would be no hope in the World... no hope for the future... any kind of future, we need them here.

Love **Mo**
(from Nenthead)

BECOME A FIGHT RACISM! FIGHT IMPERIALISM! SUPPORTER

If you are willing to help the work which FRFI is doing, become an FRFI supporter.

We need more people to sell FRFI and to involve others in the fightback. We need more people writing for FRFI about their local struggles and campaigns.

Fill in your name and address on the form below, and send £5. You will receive a supporter card, a year's subscription to FRFI and details of all our activities in your area and nationally. (Postal orders and cheques payable to Larkin Publications)

Name _____
Address _____

Send this form to Larkin Publications
BCM Box 5909 London WC1N 3XX

HANDS OFF IRELAND

NEW ELECTIONS: OLD REGIME



Charles Haughey's Fianna Fail Government collapsed on Thursday 4 November when the Fine Gael and Labour Party opposition, aided by the Workers Party, won a no-confidence motion in Haughey's economic policies. In an attempt to bail the economy out of a severe crisis, Haughey planned a savage attack on the working class involving a severe cut in state spending particularly on health and education. He also tried to enforce a 5% ceiling on public sector pay for the next four years.

New elections, the third in the last 18 months, will take place on 24 November and Garret FitzGerald of Fine Gael is tipped to become Prime Minister once again. This will make no difference to

the Irish working class. Eight months ago, FitzGerald's Fine Gael Government fell when he too attempted to force through a viciously anti-working class budget. The Fine Gael no-confidence motion on Thursday had nothing

to do with defending working class interests. It was only an opportunity taken to grab hold of power.

The 26 County state has mortgaged itself to imperialism with a staggering debt of IR£4bn. Its economy is disintegrating with inflation at 17%, unemployment at 12.5% and a balance of payments deficit of IR£1.6bn. Whichever party comes to power their first concern will be to savagely attack the working class in order to continue paying their debts to imperialist banks and ensure Irish capitalists some chance of continuing to make profits.

It will very much be a case of old wine in new bottles. And especially so in relation to the Republican Movement's struggle for national liberation against British imperialism. Under both governments, the 26 County state has stepped up collaboration with British imperialism to fight the IRA and the Republican Movement knowing full well that a victory for the Republican Movement would spell the end of Irish capitalism and the neo-colonial 26 County state.

Eddie Abrahams

De Lorean Deal Falls Through

Just before the De Lorean Car company in Dunmurray West Belfast finally collapsed John Zachary De Lorean was arrested and charged with involvement in a \$14m cocaine deal. This story linking British imperialist rule in the Six Counties, international profiteering and crookery with drug trafficking reveals imperialism for what it is: an immoral bloody system which fattens itself on suffering, poverty and oppression.

The De Lorean deal – as we pointed out in FRFI 17 – was a deal between a thug (Roy Mason, then Labour Secretary of State for the Six Counties) and a profit-

eer (John Zachary De Lorean). All Roy Mason wanted was a piece of easy propaganda about imperialism providing jobs in order to provide a 'progressive' gloss to British rule in Ireland and to distract international attention from the growing exposure of Labour-supervised torture in Castlereagh and other barracks and the H-Blocks. It did not matter whether the jobs lasted or who he did a deal with. De Lorean – a true capitalist who will take his profit where he finds it – had already been turned down by the 26 Counties and Puerto Rico and was happy to oblige Mason as long as the money was right. Which it was.

De Lorean, whilst the car company slowly died, paid himself \$440,000 per year. He lived in extreme luxury in first class hotels, travelling by Concorde and, as an extra perk, surrounding himself with high class objets d'art. Latest figures reveal that his New York office, employing just 25 people, was costing \$1.3m per month in expenses! When the honey pot provided by British imperialism was at last empty De Lorean turned to the slow death of teenagers on cocaine to maintain his useless parasitical and very costly existence.

De Lorean has the gall to claim that he was trying to 'save jobs'! What a saint the man is! Clearly a fit companion for Roy Mason, James Prior and all the other supervisors of British oppression in Ireland. The 2,600 workers of De Lorean now lose their jobs for ever and 2,000-7,000 others in Ireland and Britain are threatened. The De Lorean saga is both an indictment and a vindication. An indictment of imperialism which first creates its profit and power from unemployment, poverty and despair, and then provides drugs to deform the minds and destroy the bodies of its victims. And a vindication of the morality and humanity of the national liberation struggle to free Ireland from British rule. A struggle which will destroy British imperialism and all its De Loreans and Masons.

Terry Marlowe

FEA REPORT: NO CHANGE

The Belfast magazine *Fortnight* has revealed results from an unpublished 2½ year long investigation into the Six Counties civil service by the Fair Employment Agency (FEA). This investigation only confirms what anti-imperialists have always known: the Six Counties statelet, whether run by Stormont or Westminster, is inherently sectarian.

One of the FEA investigators concluded about the civil service:

'religion has a distinct, unique effect upon the salary level an individual holds, the occupational group in which he works, and the department in which he is found...

...[Catholics] tend to be more concentrated in the lower paid occupational groups while Protestants tend to be concentrated in those that are highly paid.'

Given that the civil service is directly controlled by the state, this report proves that the loyalist ascendancy is safe and well in the hands of the Westminster 'direct rule' team.

Fortnight also reveals, surprise surprise, that FEA has failed to use any of its legal powers to do anything about sectarian employers, instead relying on 'goodwill' of the employers. The FEA and the British claim to 'reform' are exposed for what they are: lies and tricks designed to cover the sectarian reality of the Six County statelet.

TM

BRITISH TERROR

John Tully harassed

In the early hours of the morning on 1 October British soldiers attacked 21 year old Turf Lodge man John Tully. They smashed John to the ground and gave him a severe beating with their rifle butts before leaving him lying in the street. Determined to fight back, John dragged himself to an RUC barracks to register a complaint and have a medical examination.

John Tully has been the victim of continual British army/RUC harassment and intimidation. He has been arrested and held in the notorious Castlereagh torture centre on no less than 15 occasions in the past five years. Two days after making his complaint to the RUC he was again arrested and interrogated at Castlereagh.

John's mother, Maureen, believes that the army/RUC are also trying to set John up as a 'tout'. She said 'They are doing this deliberately. They even painted on the wall "John Tully is a tout", this is nothing but harassment.'

The British army/RUC intimidation of John Tully is typical of their efforts to sow terror and division in the nationalist community. In his case, as in all the others, they are failing.

Plastic bullets

On 9 October 25 RUC thugs armed with plastic bullets burst through the doors of the Lake Glen Hotel in the Andersonstown area of Belfast. Hearing voices upstairs, one of the RUC said 'These people shouldn't be in here. I'll have them out in five seconds'.

The RUC thugs then rushed up the stairs and began firing plastic bullets indiscriminately at the nationalist people in the club. Paddy O'Neill was hit twice by ricocheting plastic bullets before being smashed across the back of the head with a baton gun. He describes the scene:

'They fired all over the place for nothing, no one did anything to them. One of them grabbed me and because

I told him I wanted to get my coat, he stuck his gun into my face and threatened to shoot me. He then smashed it over the back of my head.'

Paddy was then dragged off to the RUC barracks where he was again beaten. He later received five stitches for his head wound.

Brian Armstrong was another victim. He was hit with a plastic bullet, dragged downstairs by the hair and dumped in a landrover. He was later taken to hospital with a badly bruised side and internal bleeding around his kidneys. Ray Keenan was arrested for 'carrying a dangerous weapon': a bottle of beer he was drinking when the RUC burst in. He lost one of his front teeth after being punched in the mouth by one of the RUC thugs.

The RUC tried to cover up their acts of terror by first claiming that there had been a fight outside the hotel without mentioning their use of plastic bullets; then they claimed that one plastic bullet had been fired in the air; finally they claimed that after an RUC man had been attacked they had fired plastic bullets 'in the air'. The fact that people had been injured and there were no holes in the polyester tiled ceiling of the hotel disproves their shallow lies.

This incident is yet further proof that plastic bullets are vicious anti-civilian weapons designed only to terrorise the nationalist population.

The murder of Isobel Slowey

On 6 October a loyalist prison warder who beat to death 74 year old nationalist Isobel Slowey in July 1981 was given a conditional discharge for two years. Judge Watts declared that it would be an 'injustice to imprison' Mervyn Morrow for this most brutal attack, merely instructing Morrow to 'behave himself'.

Isobel Slowey, an old and already ill woman, was waiting to see her optician when Morrow attacked her. Within minutes he had savagely beaten her. As he was dragged away from her he shouted 'I love Ulster, I would die for Ulster'. It

was, however, Isobel Slowey who died two weeks later as a direct result of the savage attack.

Her son described her appearance after the attack:

'My mother's face was out. Her eyes were all one, she was ripped along the cheek, her nose was ripped, her dentures smashed in her mouth and the inside of her mouth was ripped, her bottom lip was severed, part of it was hanging down. Her arms, back of hands, her chest and legs were all black and blue. And the blood... she was completely red.'

This inhuman and unprovoked murder was immediately covered up by the RUC and the courts.

It was only after the family had put pressure on the local MP and councillors that the RUC were forced to charge Morrow. On 29 June 1982, 15 months after the attack, Morrow was charged with murder. Unlike nationalists gaoled on the word of touts, Morrow was given bail.

On 6 October when Morrow appeared in court the charge was reduced to manslaughter. In court the prosecution did its best, with the help of the court, to avoid prosecuting Morrow. The Judge, the prosecution and the defence cooked up a dirty deal whereby the charge of manslaughter was dropped and Morrow pleaded guilty to grievous bodily harm. Grievous bodily harm for beating to death a 74 year old woman!

Morrow gets a conditional discharge for beating an old woman to death; Bobby Sands got 14 years in prison for possession of a gun! So much for British imperialist justice! The bourgeois press has not reported this case at all. Only Andersonstown News and An Phoblacht/Republican News have exposed the protection of this loyalist murderer by the RUC and the courts. Two types of 'justice' operate under imperialism: one for the imperialists and their paid thugs and one for the oppressed people.

Alan James

PRISONERS FIGHT ON

The 145 Republican POWs in H-Block who had been on a no-work protest since the end of the second hunger strike have ended their protest for 'tactical reasons'. This decision follows the eruption of several 'disturbances' (as the Northern Ireland Office puts it) over the issue of segregation in both H-Block and Magilligan prisons.

The NIO have issued a statement threatening punishment and declaring that it will not allow segregation. The NIO recognises that segregation of Republican and Loyalist prisoners would imply a tacit recognition of the political character of the prisoners. This is why it is refusing segregation.

The fact that the issue of segregation has now come to the fore confirms that

the struggle in the prisons continues. The firm stand taken by Republican POWs has shown that they will not give up their fight for the rights of political prisoners. The NIO, which hoped that the defeat of the hunger strike campaign meant the end of the prison struggle, has received a rude shock.

TM